Understanding How Undergraduate Sexual-Minority Men Make Meaning of Their Masculine Identities Within the Context of the College Experience

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

BY

Michael Grewe

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Dr. Andrew Furco

May 2021

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge and to thank my advisor, Dr. Andrew Furco, for his mentorship, guidance, and support throughout my doctoral program at the University of Minnesota.

I would also like to thank my additional final exam committee members—Dr. Karen Miksch (my committee chair), Dr. Fernando Burga, and Dr. Joshua Collins—for their mentorship and the time they have taken to support, guide, review, critique, and strengthen my research.

I would also like to thank my colleagues at Augsburg University for their support during the 3 years of my program, including but not limited to Sarah Griesse, Joanne Reeck, Nancy Huynh, Alex Abraha, and Ann Garvey.

I want to acknowledge and to extend the deepest gratitude toward all 19 individuals who participated in this research and provided great insights, narratives, and perspectives into their lives and experiences around masculinity during their time as undergraduate students. Their stories not only shaped and cocreated what is presented in this research but also impacted and changed the understanding of my own masculinity, queerness, and identity. I am forever thankful and appreciative of their participation in this research and for their contribution toward better understanding queer masculine perspectives in higher education.

Finally—and most importantly—I would not have been successful in this program without the love, support, and patience from my husband, Jonathan Popko,

whose encouragement and motivation has sustained me in continuing and finishing this program.

Dedication

The crisis facing men is not the crisis of masculinity, it is the crisis of patriarchal masculinity. Until we make this distinction clear, men will continue to fear that any critique of patriarchy represents a threat.

bell hooks, *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love*

Abstract

Dominant systems of White masculinity—or attitudes, behaviors, and ideologies rooted in White masculine dominance alongside homophobia, misogyny, and racism—within higher education impact how students frame and understand their identities and experiences during their undergraduate careers. For sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals, these dominant systems pose significant challenges around creating a sense of belonging, finding community, dealing with microaggressions, and maintaining safety. Moreover, little is known around how White masculinity impacts sexual-minority undergraduate students' discernment of their masculine identity. This study explores how sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculine identity within the context of their experiences at a set of undergraduate postsecondary institutions in Minnesota. Utilizing a queer phenomenological research design, 19 participants from across the state were interviewed to understand how they have oriented themselves toward hegemonic masculinity, how and why that orientation has taken place, and how they have resisted conforming to those hegemonic standards. Conducting a critical thematic analysis on the transcripts, four major themes were found: (a) participants had an understanding of foundational elements of hegemonic masculinity upon matriculation; (b) participants felt oriented toward performing hegemonic masculinity on their campuses at varying times, though not without conflict; (c) participants navigated supports and safety in relation to hegemonic masculinity on their campuses; and (d) participants found agency and a desire to resist hegemonic masculine norms on their campuses. These findings provide student affairs

practitioners and faculty some suggested avenues for policymaking, cocurricular programming, and curricular offerings to support sexual-minority students in their masculine identity development and to ameliorate the negative impacts of White masculinity. These findings also offer additional opportunities to explore these topics within future research studies.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	What it means	To what it refers
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019	—
GBQ	Gay, bisexual, and queer	Gay, bisexual, and queer men and transmasculine communities
LGBQA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, and other sexual-minority identities	Sexual-minority communities (i.e., nonheterosexual people)
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender	Used in quotations from participants
LGBTQ(+)	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (and other sexual- and gender-minority identities)	Used in quotations from participants
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and other sexual- and gender-minority identities	Both sexual- and gender-minority communities (i.e., nonheterosexual and/or noncisgender communities)
QTPOC	Queer and transgender people of color	Sexual- and gender-minority communities of color

Note. Abbreviations listed above appear more than once in this study (not as an abbreviation for a cited author).

Chapter 1:

Introduction

College male students' *identity development*, or how men "[organize] experiences within the environment . . . that revolves around [themselves]" (Torres et al., 2009, p. 577), has been a priority of student affairs professionals for decades. Specifically, there has been a focus from both researchers and practitioners around how institutionalized systems—particularly around privilege, oppression, and power—shape the individual and societal narratives for undergraduate men, influence what it means to be a "man," and permeate and impact academia (Patton et al., 2016). Researchers including Edwards and Jones (2009) have suggested that upon matriculation, some undergraduate men have been socialized to devalue women, to fear queerness, to denigrate marginalized communities (e.g., people of color), to expect and to compete for sex, to repress emotions (except for anger and aggression), and to resist maintenance of their mental health—referred to by a number of scholars as performing "toxic," "hegemonic," or "White masculinity" (Anderson & McCormack, 2018; Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Collins, 2016; F. Harris, 2010; Hughey, 2012, 2014; Kimmel, 2008, 2010; O'Neil et al., 1986; Pleck, 1995; E. Watson, 2011).

Systems of *White masculinity*—which can be conceptualized as both (a) the societal privilege and social power possessed by White men at the expense of those who are not White men and (b) the ways that specific performances of Whiteness and masculinity are culturally idolized (Hughey, 2012)—are enculturated and normalized across much of higher education in the United States. White masculinity is "the gendered

and raced ideas that cut across disparate groups of men and Whites" that "while not statistically normal, is certainly normative" (Hughey, 2014, p. 272). This framework, which has been the dominant form of discourse regarding masculinity in postsecondary education (Edwards & Jones, 2009; Foubert et al., 2007; Kimmel, 2008), influences how many college students—of all genders—make meaning of their identities. Men's adherence to such hegemonic masculine identities has created a plethora of systemic challenges across college and university campuses, leaving many administrators and faculty to wonder how higher education could support men's identity formation and disrupt narratives that have often negatively impacted students as a whole.

Moreover, systems of White masculinity have created serious consequences for undergraduate sexually minoritized men and transmasculine[1] individuals who have reported higher incidents of experiencing an oppressive campus climate that prevents them from completely flourishing academically, socially, and emotionally (Greathouse et al., 2018; Rankin et al., 2010; Soria, 2018). Hegemonic masculinity has also produced an atmosphere impacting sexual minorities' physical and psychological safety on campus (White & P. H. Smith, 2004) and has prohibited many of these students from being able to live and to express as their full selves during their college experience (Brownhill et al., 2005; Strayhorn, 2018). Developing an identity whose foundations are rooted within systems of White masculinity have also prevented many sexual-minority undergraduate

[1] *Transmasculine* is a descriptor for "individuals assigned a female sex at birth who identify as a man, male, or another diverse nonbinary gender identity on the masculine spectrum" (Reisner et al., 2018, p. 2). For the purposes of this study, a *man* refers to a person who identifies as a man regardless of their sex assigned at birth; a *transmasculine individual* refers to a person who identifies as both (a) on the masculine spectrum and (b) nonbinary, genderqueer, agender, or a gender between or beyond the man–woman binary.

men and transmasculine individuals from developing the moral, spiritual, and emotional character that is required to interact across human differences, as well as treat others with compassion, dignity, and respect (Bonilla-Silva, 2010).

Addressing these challenges means being able to conceptualize what is happening within systems of higher education both individually and institutionally. Given that higher education was created for the benefit of White heterosexual cisgender men, it is not surprising that most original student development theories (e.g., first-wave theories) grew out of studies primarily based on White heterosexual cisgender men at elite, 4-year residential institutions (Patton et al., 2016; Robbins, 2019). In recent decades, as the population of undergraduate students has become more diverse, student affairs researchers and professionals have begun to look more critically at how dominant social systems—particularly those that are hegemonic and oppressive in nature—have impacted the identity development of students (Patton et al., 2016). Although there has been extensive research on the psychosocial, cognitive, emotional, moral, spiritual, and academic development of White heterosexual cisgender men in higher education, there has not been as much of a critical look at how men possessing marginalized identities make meaning of that development in the context of dominant systems of Whiteness, cisheteronormativity[2], and hegemonic masculinity.

Student affairs professionals have an important role to play in addressing the identity development of undergraduate men, as well as implementing strategies that

[2] *Cisheteronormativity* describes the ways that sexual- and gender-minority communities have been "abnormalized and unnaturalized" historically and currently in society (Chevrette & Eguchi, 2020, p. 55).

attempt to mitigate the impacts of White masculinity on student identity formation. Identity development has been a core tenet of the profession since its modern beginnings, and it is currently an ethical standard of many in the field (American College Personnel Association [ACPA], n.d.; American Council on Education [ACE], 1937). Moreover, with growing numbers of sexual-minority students across institutions of higher education, it is imperative that those working in student affairs understand the populations with whom they interact and how best to work with them (Mayhew et al., 2016). This requires knowledge around how systems of oppression like White masculinity impact the ways undergraduate men—including gay, bisexual, and queer[3] (GBQ) men and transmasculine individuals—make meaning of their cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and identity development. Having the resources, skills, and tools to understand how hegemonic masculinity impacts sexual-minority undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals can allow student affairs practitioners to develop appropriate programs and interventions that work to address some of the aforementioned issues (Patton et al., 2016).

Since the 1980s, the research focus on White heterosexual cisgender men in relation to the impacts of White masculinity in higher education has led to advancing approaches that have catered to this population. However, little is known about how prevalent frames of White masculinity impact GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals, especially GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine people of color (Hale & Ojeda, 2018). Most studies have not included these populations,

[3] *Queer* is a sexual orientation "that is often characterized by the incorporation of fluidity and antinormativity" (Amherst College Queer Resource Center, n.d., Terms, Definitions and Labels section, para. 74).

and those that have done so have often had small sample sizes that are nongeneralizable or have not broken down demographic information for readers to understand the differences among sexual-minority groups. Consequently, there is a lack of understanding around how systems of White masculinity impact sexual-minority undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals, how those experiences differ from or are similar to their heterosexual cisgender male undergraduate peers, and how student affairs professionals and those across higher education can support GBQ male and transmasculine students' development in the context of these existing systems (Duran, 2019; Renn, 2010).

Sexual-Minority Students in Higher Education

The overall student composition of higher education has become increasingly diverse over the past half century. Since the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (i.e., the G.I. Bill of Rights) was authorized in 1944, millions of individuals whose families had never attended college were able to do so, creating future generations of students who had parents who were able to help them navigate the challenges of higher education (Boyer, 1990). Additionally, the Civil Rights and Women's Rights Movements of the 1960s and 1970s enabled more people of color and women to attend postsecondary institutions than ever before. Whereas White men used to be the numerical majority across most of higher education, in 2018, 56% of all undergraduate students were women, and 48% were students of color or Indigenous students (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2020). And although colleges and universities have become more rapidly diverse in gender and racial demographics, many institutions still face challenges in

responding to emerging concerns and needs of minoritized-student populations (Mayhew et al., 2016).

Campuses have also become more diverse in their demographics with respect to sexually minoritized students. The American College Health Association (2016) surveyed hundreds of campuses across the United States, and with a sample size of 95,761 participants, found that 19.6% of individuals identified as something other than "heterosexual/straight." Moreover, there have been rising numbers of students who identify as openly lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, and other minoritized sexual orientations (LGBQA+) across institutions of higher education (Renn, 2017). Some postsecondary institutions now track demographics around sexual orientation utilizing questions placed on their admissions application as a tool to understand how to better serve these communities (Campus Pride, n.d.-c). Despite the growing number of students from sexually minoritized communities within postsecondary educational settings, significant challenges remain for institutions in creating welcoming and equitable spaces, which can often translate into less-than-positive experiences, discrimination, lack of institutional supports, and significant identity-development impacts for LGBQA+ students, especially for LGBQA+ transgender students or LGBQA+ students of color (Duran, 2019; Greenhouse et al., 2018; Hoffman & Pryor, 2018; R. A. Miller & Dika, 2018).

Issues Facing Sexual-Minority Students

Sexual-minority students face unique issues related to their mental, emotional, social, and academic well-being compared to their heterosexual counterparts. The success

of LGBQA+ students can be conceptualized through an ecological framework, which "describes the reciprocity between the individual and their environments" (Hong et al., 2016, p. 118). The ecological framework can be understood by knowing a student's *microsystem* and *mesosystem*, or immediate environment and close interactions with others; a student's *exosystem*, or external influences that indirectly impact them; and a student's *macrosystem*, or broader culture (Hong et al., 2016). Thus, for LGBQA+ undergraduate students, this can be conceptualized as students' immediate relationships and interactions between peers and faculty (i.e., microsystem and mesosystem); the support students feel from their campus toward sexual minorities through institutional policies, practices, and protocols (i.e., exosystem); and the broader support and stigma LGBQA+ students experience from society at large (i.e., macrosystem; Hong et al., 2016). Lack of support in any of these systems within or outside of higher education can prevent sexual-minority students from achieving their full potential on campus and may leave them vulnerable to isolation, harm, trauma, and mental health concerns.

Sense of Belonging

Having a *sense of belonging*—or "a feeling of connectedness that one is important or matters to others" (Strayhorn, 2018, p. 2)—at a postsecondary institution has been shown to be correlated to students' long-term success, including retention and graduation, academic success, social connectedness, and emotional and physical well-being (Patton et al., 2016). In their study of sexual- and gender-minority students at research universities in the United States, Greathouse et al. (2018) found that in the year prior to starting their undergraduate careers, GBQ students reported being more likely to experience regular

feelings of depression than their heterosexual counterparts, whereas nearly twice the number of transgender students (62.0%) reported such feelings versus those who are cisgender (34.4%). Such mental health issues are often caused by a lack of belonging or inclusion from family, peers, and people in authority within and outside of their school environments (e.g., teachers, coaches, administrators, etc.; Greathouse et al., 2018; Rankin et al., 2010).

However, once arriving at a postsecondary institution, sexual-minority students can still have difficulty finding such connectedness despite striving to belong and to be socially validated by their peers (Greathouse et al., 2018; Strayhorn, 2018). As a result of feeling unwelcomed, Greathouse et al. (2018) reported that LGBQA+ and transgender students felt "less satisfied with their academic and social experience as compared to" their heterosexual and cisgender peers, respectively (p. 67). And more importantly, sexual- and gender-minority students do not necessarily have to experience direct acts of prejudice or violence to find a campus as unwelcoming or as noninclusive. For example, an institution may communicate an unwelcoming environment in more covert ways, including a lack of policies, few resources, or an absence of a visible sexual- and gender-minority community on campus (Rankin et al., 2010). As a result of these issues, it is not surprising that Hoffman and Pryor (2018) reported that sexual-minority students were more likely to say that they felt less welcomed on their campuses than their heterosexual peers.

A lack of belonging and connectedness with other students can often mean continued or worsening mental health symptoms (e.g., depression and anxiety) for

LGBQA+ and transgender students. Such mental health concerns—particularly among sexual-minority undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals—overwhelmingly go untreated. Only 1 in 20 college men seek treatment for mental health issues such as depression (E. Watson, 2011), though it is unclear how many of those individuals are GBQ-identified. Unwelcoming campus climates can also foster what is known as *internalized homophobia*, *internalized biphobia*, or *internalized transphobia*, where LGBQA+ and transgender people can not only lack self-esteem but also harbor feelings of self-loathing, self-prejudice, self-stigma, and/or self-hate as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity (Greathouse et al., 2018; Moradi et al., 2010; Murchison et al., 2017).

Feelings of depression, low self-esteem, and self-hate can lead to behaviors that inflict self-harm and prevent academic success. For example, compared to their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts, LGBQA+ and transgender collegiate students have reported in various studies to use alcohol, marijuana, and other substances at higher rates, respectively, especially in coping with mental health concerns that seem out of their control (Greathouse et al., 2018; Hoffman & Pryor, 2018). Such challenges are compounded when students also possess additional marginalized identities. For example, Strayhorn (2018) found that gay men of color have a significant desire to feel a part of their campus community and that this "quest for belonging led, at times, to seemingly antisocial and unhealthy behaviors such as drugs (some intravenous), excessive alcohol, and unsafe, unprotected sex with same-sex partners" (p. 64). Therefore, failing to create a sense of belongingness among campus peers, staff, and faculty can have significant

mental and physical health impacts for sexual- and gender-minority undergraduate students.

Discrimination and Safety

Inclusion within a postsecondary institution goes beyond a sense of belonging; students also must feel safe from physical and psychological harm. Safety is often illusive for many sexual-minority students in colleges across the country. Rankin et al. (2010) conducted a national survey of sexual- and gender-minority collegiate students. This research found that nearly twice as many sexual-minority students (23%) were "significantly more likely to experience harassment" than heterosexual students (12%) and that such behaviors toward them were usually a result of their sexual orientation (Rankin et al., 2010, p. 10). Such harassment was reported to be even higher among transgender students (>80%) compared to their cisgender counterparts (20%; Rankin et al., 2010).

Rankin et al. (2010) also noted that LGBQA+ and transgender students of color were more likely to report being the focus of discriminatory attitudes and behaviors compared to their White LGBQA+ and transgender student counterparts and that such discrimination was a result of their racial, gender, and/or sexual identities. Moreover, safety for sexual- and gender-minority students also includes prevention of sexual assault. Research suggests that GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals have been more likely to be the victims of sexual assault than their heterosexual counterparts (Mellins et al., 2017), though it is unclear how many GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals have been targeted by incidents of sexual assault while

enrolled at a postsecondary institution. Being the target of such stigma, harassment, and violence can inhibit academic success and social integration among LGBQA+ and transgender students (Woodford & Kulick, 2015).

Microaggressions

Sexual- and gender-minority students also experience *microaggressions* from faculty and classmates (R. A. Miller & Dika, 2018); these are considered to be "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative . . . slights and insults on the target person or group" (Sue et al., 2007, p. 273). Examples include downplaying or denying the lived experiences of sexual- and gender-minority students with heterosexism and cissexism, respectively; derogatory language or behaviors toward LGBQA+ and transgender people, whether intentional or not; assuming students can speak for their whole sexual- or gender-minority group; and promoting heterosexist and cissexist norms and values within the academic curriculum (McCabe et al., 2013; Nadal et al., 2016; Sparks, 2015). Microaggressions against LGBQA+, transgender, and other minoritized students have been found to be more common on college campuses than overt harassment or violence against those communities (Hong et al., 2016). Such indignities over time can increase the potential for "academic disengagement, attrition, and decreased engagement in and out of the classroom" (Greathouse et al., 2018, p. 51). Therefore, being the target of sustained microaggressions over one's undergraduate career have a significant impact on the mental and physical health, as well as overall

academic and social success of LGBQA+ and transgender students, particularly those with additional marginalized identities.

Minority Stressors

Many GBQ men and transmasculine individuals do face specific hardships regarding maintaining their mental health within postsecondary educational settings. Research has shown that GBQ men and transmasculine individuals have faced consistent exposure to antiqueer microaggressions and bias, potentially facing chronic levels of stress related to systemic heterosexism and cissexism within society (Hamilton & Mahalik, 2009; Jourian & McCloud, 2020). Such stress has been shown to be correlated to various physical and mental health issues, including having higher rates of riskier sexual practices, suicidality, depression, anxiety, and panic attacks compared to their straight cisgender male counterparts (Boysen et al., 2006; Hamilton & Mahalik, 2009; Jourian & McCloud, 2020). Stressors related to homophobia can also contribute to poor mental and physical health outcomes, as "minority stress may influence [gay men's perspectives] of normative substance use and sexual behavior, and, henceforth, their own use of substances and sexual behavior" (Hamilton & Mahalik, 2009, p. 138). *Minority stressors* "[refer] to the experience of stigmatization for being [GBQ] in a society in which homosexuality is negatively sanctioned and includes the experience of victimizations, rejection, and other stressful events" (Flood et al., 2013, p. 369). Nevertheless, many counselors—including mental health professionals working in higher education—sometimes rely on myths and stereotypes to inform their understandings around the therapeutic needs of collegiate men who are sexually minoritized, including

endorsing clichéd ideas around how mental health impacts GBQ men and transmasculine individuals (e.g., assuming gay men will be impacted by mood, eating, body image, and/or other disorders; Boysen et al., 2006). These biases can impact GBQ collegiate men and transmasculine individuals from receiving adequate treatment for their mental health on their campus.

Conforming to White Masculinity as a Means for Survival

As a result of feeling unwelcomed, unsafe, or the target of frequent microaggressions by fellow college peers—as well as the stress and stigma students incur from being perceived as a sexual or gender minority—many LGBQA+ and transgender students make the decision to remain closeted, at least in certain spaces on campus. Often, campuses can feel unsafe for sexual and gender minorities, and students will sometimes go to great lengths to avoid being coded as nonheterosexual or noncisgender by others, including avoiding topics about LGBQA+ and transgender communities in conversations in classrooms and with peers, as well as distancing themselves from spaces where LGBQA+ and transgender individuals congregate (e.g., student organizations, campus centers, specific courses, etc.; Greathouse et al., 2018). In fact, many students who identify as straight harbor nonheterosexual desires or have engaged in sexual activity with people of the same gender but choose not to identify as LGBQA+ due to concerns around safety or stigma (Greathouse et al., 2018). In other words, sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals are often keenly aware of how their perceived gender performance—and in turn, their perceived sexuality—impacts their safety, their acceptance by others, and their success on campus. This awareness of their perceived

sexuality means that many sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals are often prohibited from being their full selves on campus and may perform their identities in ways that are counter to who they are and to their core beliefs.

Foundational literature around male identity has shown a strong correlation between the performance of and the validation around one's masculinity with one's perceived sexuality; that is, the more a man conforms to norms that correspond to White masculinity, the more that man is perceived by others to be heterosexual and thus validated, affirmed, and accepted by others (Connell, 1987; O'Neil et al., 1986). Although some research has been conducted on how systems of White masculinity impact the performance of gay men's masculinity in college (Murchison et al., 2017), there are still unknowns as to how this plays out across different sexual- and gender-minority communities, including bisexual and queer men, GBQ transgender men and transmasculine individuals, and GBQ people of color (Duran, 2019). That is, there is still more to be explored around how masculine identity shapes sexual-minority men's and transmasculine individuals' experiences in college, how they make meaning of themselves and their surroundings, and how they respond to external pressures and to other individuals in order to feel safe, secure, and supported.

Overt and covert discriminatory attitudes and behaviors against sexual- and gender-minority students have resulted in many undergraduates feeling disconnected from peers and faculty, fearing for their safety on campus, and believing that they have little recourse or support from their institution as a whole. Finding ways for sexual-minority students to thrive on campus—particularly GBQ transgender students and GBQ

students of color—is paramount for institutions of higher education in order to support the holistic well-being of their student populations. Understanding how sexual-minority male and transmasculine students make meaning of their masculinity within the context of their postsecondary educational experiences may help higher education professionals better understand how these students navigate their surroundings and larger systems of White masculinity, as well as provide potential interventions or solutions in addressing the aforementioned concerns facing sexual-minority students as a whole.

Roles and Implications for Higher Education

Student affairs professionals have had a historical and ethical responsibility to nurture and to facilitate the growth and development of the students with whom they work (ACE, 1937; ACPA, n.d.). Systems of White masculinity on college and university campuses have been found to significantly influence students' sense of self, sense of belonging, and sense of safety; consequently, practitioners have a role to play in the aforementioned challenges faced by sexually minoritized students in postsecondary educational settings. Knowing the impacts that White masculinity has on GBQ students can provide practitioners with the tools, resources, and skills necessary to enact appropriate interventions to assist them in these goals. Therefore, with this population continuing to grow on campuses across the United States—and with little being known about how hegemonic forces such as Whiteness and masculinity affect this specific population—additional research will help build greater and deeper understanding of the impacts these systems have on GBQ men and transmasculine individuals, particularly

GBQ people who share additional marginalized identities (e.g., GBQ students of color and GBQ transgender students).

Historical Role of Student Affairs

Concern around the development of students in higher education is not new. For nearly a century, the student affairs profession has articulated the need to support and "to consider the student as a whole—[their] intellectual capacity and social relationships, [their] emotional make up, [their] physical condition, [their] social relationships, [their] vocational aptitudes and skills, [and their] moral and religious values" (ACE, 1937, p. 1). This commitment to students' holistic well-being is centered around the idea that students who are maintaining healthy balances within the social, emotional, physical, and economic realms of their life can achieve successful academic performance (ACE, 1937). Many traditionally aged undergraduate students[4] grow cognitively, emotionally, and psychosocially with great complexity during their tenure in higher education (Jetha & Segalowitz, 2012). Student affairs professionals have often focused on ensuring ways of providing supports and challenges in order to guide students on pathways that support their success, health, and well-being (Patton et al., 2016).

By the late twentieth century, many higher education researchers and student affairs practitioners realized that focusing on students' psychosocial and cognitive development was not enough. Higher education, they claimed, must address the structural and institutional impacts that systems of higher education and society at large have on

[4] A *traditionally aged undergraduate student* is a student who is 18–24 years of age, especially one who enrolls at a postsecondary institution immediately after graduating from high school (NCES, n.d.).

students' identity formation (Jones & D. L. Stewart, 2016; Patton et al., 2016). Identity development does not occur in a vacuum but is influenced by the context of the environment in which the student is located (Strayhorn, 2016). Research shifted from focusing on one singular identity (e.g., race, sexuality, etc.) to *intersectionality*, understanding that students have multiple identities that influence how they interact with the world around them (Crenshaw, 1991). Intersectionality "rejects the postpositivist assumptions of an additive approach to social inequality, in which oppression is measured by adding together the effects of identifying with more than one marginalized group (for example, identifying as Black, a woman, and a lesbian)" (Robbins & McGowan, 2016, p. 76). Students' intersecting identities impact how they navigate higher education bureaucracies, whether it is interacting with faculty, experiencing the curriculum, participating in cocurricular activities, living in the residence halls, or navigating issues with campus security or public safety officials. A student's mosaic of identities impacts how they may experience college, their sense of belonging on campus, their self-worth and agency, and whether they want to continue to be enrolled at a specific campus or in higher education at all (Abes & Hernández, 2016; Bonilla-Silva, 2015; Johnston-Guerrero, 2016; Patton et al., 2016; Robbins & McGowan, 2016).

Focus on Power and Privilege

Many student affairs researchers have focused on identity development and structural issues that center the most marginalized students, including students of color, disabled students, sexually minoritized students, transgender students, and women (Patton et al., 2016; Strayhorn, 2016). In recent decades, however, researchers and

practitioners have begun to scrutinize how students' privileged identities (e.g., White, male, able-bodied, heterosexual, cisgender, etc.) impact their cognitive, emotional, and academic growth, as well as how those individuals have influenced their fellow classmates' development and their surrounding campus climates (Patton et al., 2016). A student's understanding and exercise of their privilege has consequences for how student affairs practitioners implement their work and engage with their students. For example, social contact with diverse individuals is not enough for students to change prejudicial beliefs; without deliberate pedagogical strategies, students may continue to enact biased attitudes and behaviors toward marginalized students, impacting the latter students' sense of belonging, self-esteem, and safety (Pettigrew, 1998). Practitioners can provide tailored strategies that allow students to think about the privileges they hold and how they could use their power to impact positive social change, benefiting students' moral, cognitive, and academic development (King & Shuford, 1996; Patton et al., 2016).

The power and privilege possessed by students have significance in how undergraduates understand their positionality in the world, including whether they have the ability to empathize with those who are different from them, how they treat fellow peers and classmates, and how they contribute toward broader campus dynamics (i.e., classroom, residential, cocurricular, social, etc.) that either includes and empowers marginalized students or excludes and disempowers them (Bonilla-Silva, 2015; Johnston-Guerrero, 2016; Robbins & McGowan, 2016). Consequently, based on the profession's values, those working in student affairs within higher education have an ethical responsibility to address how issues of power and privilege—including White

masculinity—impact the shaped narratives, lived experiences, attitudes, and behaviors of the undergraduate students with whom they work (ACPA, n.d.).

Postsecondary initiatives that have attempted to ameliorate inequitable systems or biased attitudes and behaviors have not always been successful or impactful. First, not all conversations focused on diversity with fellow classmates are positive; negative interactions and conversations around race and gender can lead to students leaving a classroom more biased than before they came (Gurin et al., 2013). Second, power dynamics are still present within these conversations. White heterosexual cisgender men are often set up to gain the most out of cross-racial dialogues, whereas minoritized students are sometimes asked to divulge a disproportionate amount of pain or negative experiences in order to facilitate the learning of their peers who possess more dominant identities (Collins, 2016; Lewis et al., 2000). Finally, how a student views their identity has a significant impact on how they may perceive academic or cocurricular content related to topics surrounding race and gender. Though being aware of one's privilege is important in social justice education, this can backfire for many students who have dominant identities. Some students may see privilege as a purely individual (and not a systemic) phenomenon; conversely, others whose identities are fairly developed may have their preconceived frameworks around gender and race validated, such as ideas around meritocracy, equal opportunity, or supposed cultural aspects of success (Branscombe et al., 2007; Lensmire et al., 2013). This understanding of privilege suggests that dialogue across racial and gender identity requires specific pedagogical strategies in order to navigate challenges of varying interactions among students, to

prevent further harm of minoritized students, and to mitigate reinforcement of colorblind frameworks that students may already possess.

Need for Research and Action

Because postsecondary education works with students who are in the process of developing meanings of themselves and the world around them—including the development of their own identities—higher education has a role to play in order to interrupt socializations within students who continue to further White supremacy, male supremacy, cisheteronormativity, and other forms of oppression (Chevrette & Eguchi, 2020; Jayakumar, 2015; Mayhew et al., 2016). Studies have demonstrated a relationship between one's adherence to toxic-masculinity identities and one's tendencies to perpetuate racist, misogynistic, and homophobic behaviors (Anderson & McCormack, 2018). These attitudes can impact how men perceive and police their and others' identities; acting feminine can often be equated to being sexually minoritized, which can be considered antithetical to masculinity (Reigeluth & Addis, 2016). And such behaviors have disproportionately impacted GBQ men and transmasculine individuals: Twenty-three percent of GBQ collegiate students reported antiqueer behaviors from their heterosexual cisgender peers (Rankin et al., 2010). And over the past several decades, higher education has become more racially diverse, with students of color and Indigenous students comprising slightly less than half of all undergraduates in the United States (Brown, 2019). However, this compositional diversity has not led to equitable outcomes for minoritized students, as many students of color have reported an unwelcoming campus climate due to racial hostility, microaggressions, and a lack of sense of

community at predominantly White postsecondary institutions (Duran, 2019; Soria, 2018).

The impacts and legacies of systemic racism, heterosexism, and cissexism are a significant challenge facing student affairs practitioners and students alike (Jourian, 2017; Morgan et al., 2015). Such a climate stems, in part, from the previous racist socialization of many White students, staff, and faculty who are often isolated from communities of color and who believe themselves to be incapable of engaging in racist or oppressive behaviors (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). Many White men—including White GBQ men and transmasculine individuals—are especially prone to enable attitudes and behaviors that further White supremacy on campuses, as White masculine cultural norms of individualization and rationalization (i.e., not showing emotion) prevent many men from seeing themselves as culpable for systemic racism or from being prepared to do the emotional work required for racial justice, respectively (Welp, 2002). To take actions that are effective and sustainable at addressing the impacts of White masculinity on GBQ men and transmasculine individuals within higher education, more must be understood around how these students experience masculinity within the context of their college experiences.

Research Question

With this context and background, I decided to focus on the following overarching research question for this study: How do sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculine identity within the context of their experience at an undergraduate postsecondary institution? Chapter 2 focuses on a

comprehensive literature review that aims to understand what existing and emerging literature exists on White masculinity in higher education, specifically focusing on (a) GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals and (b) where research gaps in the literature exist. Additionally, it poses some potential questions that current research leaves unanswered or that needs further explanation, particularly for studies that are limited within their demographics or methodological approaches.

Chapter 2:

Literature Review

Utilizing critical masculinity and critical race theoretical frameworks, this literature review explores how GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculinity within systems of higher education. However, the research studies that were used to create and that have since utilized these frameworks have been predominately centered on the experiences of White heterosexual cisgender men in college. Thus, although this literature review will explore the research on those communities, it primarily focuses on how GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals attribute meaning to their masculinities. Critical frameworks—particularly critical masculinity and critical race theories—are utilized to describe and to conceptualize how White masculinity impacts systems of higher education. A comprehensive review of the literature will discuss what is known about how GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculinity and other identities within postsecondary educational settings, including

- how internalized oppression (i.e., internalized homophobia, internalized biphobia, and internalized transphobia) impacts GBQ students' attitudes, behaviors, and experiences on their campuses;
- the desire for GBQ students to be validated in their masculinity by others and to maintain their safety; and
- the ways that GBQ students compare themselves and compete against other men with respect to their masculinity.

Finally, gaps in the literature are explored, particularly around the significance these systems have on sexually minoritized undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals, as well as what additional questions these gaps raise in relation to how GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals develop and understand their masculine identity.

Theoretical Framework

Critical frameworks—including critical race theory, feminist theory, and queer theory, among others—challenge the notion that higher education is a "neutral" space (W. A. Smith et al., 2007). These frameworks argue that higher education was established for privileged communities at the expense and exploitation of marginalized communities (Robbins, 2019). Any action or inaction taken by institutions of higher education makes a statement and has an impact on various communities both within and outside these spaces, particularly communities who have been traditionally oppressed. For example, the focus of a Eurocentric framework within an institution's central curriculum, despite perhaps not being created by faculty with an intention toward racial animus, nevertheless omits the contributions, histories, and narratives of people of color from students' learning (Cabrera et al., 2016). Because of this, neutrality does not exist; in fact, the supposed absence of a stance or position in one's work does not constitute unbiased thinking but instead means one actually is aligning oneself with the status quo of higher education, which traditionally has been to exclude marginalized communities from enjoying the full access and benefits of its resources (Robbins, 2019). This study's theoretical framework is rooted in both critical masculinity and critical race theories,

which utilized together provide a foundation for understanding White masculinity (Hughey, 2012).

Critical Masculinity Theory

Postmodern and critical feminist researchers have made efforts to understand how social structures and institutions impact the identity development of men and transmasculine individuals. Over recent decades, researchers studying men and masculinities have utilized what has become known as the *social construction of masculinities*. Through this lens, hegemonic ideals of masculinity in dominant United States culture have six main attributes, including

- lack of emotions,
- homophobia (and other forms of oppression),
- the need for power and control,
- restrictive sexual affection,
- obsession with success, and
- health care problems (O'Neil et al., 1986).

This framework underscores "social interactions, social structures, and social contexts in producing and reinforcing so-called normative expectations of masculine behavior . . . [challenging] earlier research on men, which assumed that biological differences between men and women were explanatory factors for men's . . . stereotypically masculine behaviors" (F. Harris, 2010, p. 299). A person learns genders rather than having inherent gendered traits, understanding one's expectations, roles, and identities from those around them. Therefore, any differences between men's and women's attitudes and behaviors are

not biological but are rather learned through societal influences (F. Harris, 2010; Phillips, 2006). This framework states that through the repetitive reinforcement, rewarding, and punishment of gender boundaries by their external environments, individuals subscribe to a particular way of thinking about their gender. For men and transmasculine individuals, this often can mean looking to others for validation around whether they are meeting societal masculine expectations (F. Harris, 2010; Jourian & McCloud, 2020; O'Neil et al., 1986; Pleck, 1995).

Many social scientists have pushed back on the man–woman gender binary, arguing not only that gender has many more than two options but also that individuals who subscribe to more masculine or feminine identities can express across a spectra of gender possibilities (Hart et al., 2019). These different gender presentations are often dependent upon one's cultural surroundings and other social identity characteristics (F. Harris, 2010). However, in the United States, *toxic masculinity* is often culturally idealized, or a performance of gender that is grounded in femmephobia (i.e., misogyny and the fear by men of being perceived as feminine by others; B. Miller & Behm-Morawitz, 2016). Within college settings, this has often translated into the harm and denigration of undergraduate women through bias, harassment, and sexual assault (Fleming & Davis, 2018), as well as the fear by undergraduate men of being perceived as feminine or nonheterosexual by their peers (Woodford et al., 2013). Hegemonic masculinity, therefore, is frequently not only a romanticized version of gender performance among men and transmasculine individuals but also a culturally acceptable way to think and to behave negatively toward women, sexually minoritized people, and

any characteristic that is normally seen as feminine (e.g., weak, powerless, inferior, etc.; F. Harris & Struve, 2009; Jourian & McCloud, 2020; Kimmel, 2010).

Critical Race Theory

Critical theories of masculinity suggest that men and transmasculine individuals face significant challenges around how they interpret and navigate their gender identity, particularly in the context of systems of White supremacy, patriarchy, and heterosexism (Connell, 1995). They explore how societal structures impact the lived experiences and identities of men, including around the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality, as well as through an intersectional lens that does not simply treat identities as additive components but understands that a person's unique combination of identities will influence how one navigates the world and experiences societal oppression (Crenshaw, 1991). Though masculinity is a focus, it is shortsighted to analyze identity through a singular lens. Race, class, gender, and other social identities all impact students' lived experiences, and no issue can necessarily be explained simply by the lens of one form of oppression (Collins, 2016).

Critical masculinity theories align with critical race theory in their analysis of power, privilege, and oppression in the everyday lives of individuals (Bonilla-Silva, 2015). Critical race theory suggests that social norms and mores in the contemporary United States cannot be viewed through a race-neutral lens; indeed, critical race theorists claim that racism and White supremacy impact every aspect of people's lived experiences (Cabrera et al., 2016). Moreover, this theoretical framework "[acknowledges] the social construction of race and the high value placed upon [White] identities at the expense of

people of color" while "[examining] the . . . racialization of people of color based on the needs and desires of racially dominant groups" (Patton & Bondi, 2015, p. 492). Racism is embedded in every social structure, and no person is immune to being socialized through a framework and lens of White supremacy (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Cabrera et al., 2016; Patton & Bondi, 2015).

White Masculinity

Because of the inseparable, intimate ties between racism and misogyny, many refer to hegemonic masculinity as *White masculinity*, as such gender performances are only able to be performed by White men without consequence (Hughey, 2012, 2014). In other words, White men are allowed to act in more hypermasculine[5] ways than their peers of color (e.g., being unemotional, strong, confident, etc.), and they benefit from both racial and gender privilege (Collins, 2016; Hughey, 2012, 2014; Spanierman et al., 2012). Moreover, White masculinity "[emphasizes] that *Whiteness* and *masculinities* together resemble a bifurcated political spectrum . . . [resulting] from the changing relations of men and Whites to patriarchy, White supremacy, and a substantial 'backlash' to antiracism and feminism" (Hughey, 2012, p. 99). Homophobia, sexism, and racism serve as useful tools to prove one's masculinity and to denigrate the dignity of others (Herek, 1986). Although White masculinities do not just impact White men, much of the research surrounding these hegemonic standards has almost exclusively focused on White heterosexual cisgender men. Traditional critical theories of masculinity do not explain

[5] *Hypermasculinity* refers to "a man's rigid adherence of an extreme set of stereotypical beliefs about attributes of 'real men' in relation to other men, women, and the world" (Cunningham et al., 2013, p. 244).

internalized homophobia or biphobia for GBQ men and transmasculine individuals, especially GBQ people of color, or how hegemonic masculinity specifically impacts those populations.

Socialization and Allyship

Critical masculinity and critical race theories would suggest that each person—as a result of growing up in a sexist, racist, and homophobic society—is socialized to believe and to embody sexist, racist, and homophobic attitudes and behaviors (Bonilla-Silva, 2015; Cabrera et al., 2016). Consequently, through this framework, no person is immune from the impacts of systems of White masculinity. However, critical theories do not suggest that each person believes and embodies the same things, as individuals—including those who possess both dominant and marginalized identities—may exhibit beliefs and demeanors that counter oppressive ideas. Many individuals do resist such systems and attempt to unlearn what they have been taught; this work is traditionally called allyship (Patton & Bondi, 2015).

In this context, *allyship* has meant someone from a more dominant identity working with individuals from marginalized identities to "[work] to end oppression" and change policies, practices, and procedures within organizations and institutional systems for the better (Goldstein, 2017, p. 345). However, those men who attempt to engage in allyship—or who attempt to adhere to more inclusive or egalitarian forms of masculinity—may face consequences in the form of invalidation, social isolation, or even violence from others, especially other male peers (Connell, 1995; Wedgwood, 2009). Nevertheless, men can and do actively resist systems of White masculinity. Conversely,

men who possess marginalized identities can be impacted and socialized by these same systems, resulting in some from marginalized groups adopting attitudes and behaviors that promote systems of White masculinity.

Internalized Oppression

In order to maintain a sense of control over how they are perceived by others (and themselves), some men go to great lengths to protect their reputations through adhering to hegemonic forms of masculinity, often acting out through discriminatory and prejudicial behaviors, as well as attempting to demean or to harm women, sexually minoritized people, and men of color (Bernstein Sycamore, 2012; Connell, 1987; Vandello et al., 2008). The idealization of hegemonic masculinities, moreover, enables these men to view their identities primarily through a lens of oppressing and controlling others (Pleck, 1995). And men who do not subscribe to such toxic-masculinity identities are not removed from such pressures. Many men—including those who reject hegemonic standards of masculinity—still face stressors from other peers to conform to the aforementioned constructs suggested by O'Neil et al. (1986).

Decades of research have demonstrated that, in order to be successful, the social, emotional, and physical health and well-being of students is essential (Mayhew et al., 2016; Patton et al., 2016). Consequently, the impacts that systems of White masculinity have—discriminatory attitudes and behaviors, the need for validation from peers, and constant self-evaluation of their identities in comparison to fellow men's—will have a negative impact on the overall health of collegiate men. And because such poor health can affect the success and achievement of such students, student affairs professionals,

administrators, and faculty should be concerned and invested in attempting to combat the impacts of these systems of masculinity. Although significant literature exists around the impacts of oppression when it is turned toward oneself—also known as internalized oppression[6]—not much has been written about how systems of White masculinity influence GBQ men and transmasculine individuals' concept of their sexualities, especially knowing that one of the tenets of masculine hegemony is being or is maintaining a perception of being heterosexual, or the avoidance and rejection of queerness (O'Neil et al., 1986).

Homophobia and Misogyny

Many undergraduate men—especially heterosexual cisgender men—who adopt hegemonic identities conceptualize their masculinity as what they are not: neither feminine nor GBQ. Masculinity to many of these men is deeply rooted in a fear or even a hatred of femininity, queerness, and anything perceived or associated to be weak (Caswell & Sackett-Fox, 2018; Reigeluth & Addis, 2016; Theodore & Basow, 2000). Corprew et al. (2014) conducted a quantitative survey on 328 heterosexual men from three colleges in the southern United States and found that men who exhibited hypermasculine gender expressions—or toxic masculinities—tended to harbor higher levels of antifeminine attitudes, aggression, and sexual entitlement as well as lower levels of emotional expressiveness compared to other men in the study. In addition to exhibiting such characteristics, many college men have felt pressured to police other men's

[6] *Internalized oppression* is a "psychological phenomenon that occurs when a person comes to internalize oppressive prejudices and biases about the identity group(s) to which [they] belong" (Liebow, 2016, p. 713).

behaviors, attempting to ensure fellow male peers (a) conducted themselves to standards deemed appropriate to masculine behavior and (b) were validated in their masculine identity performance (Reigeluth & Addis, 2016).

Homophobia and misogyny can be seen as major tools for men who ascribe to White masculinity in order to validate their personal identity and to maintain power and control over others. Many men consider their masculinity inherently tied to others perceiving them to be heterosexual (O'Neil et al., 1986). Masculinity can be viewed as an identity possessing characteristics of wealth, success, and strength, whereas femininity (also exhibited as queerness in men) can be seen as equivalent to being poor, a failure, and weak (Theodore & Basow, 2000). Theodore and Basow (2000) conducted quantitative research on 85 primarily White, all-heterosexual men in college to determine the connection they felt between their sexual orientation and their masculinity. They found that men who exhibited homophobic attitudes were more likely to value being seen as having masculine attributes by their friends and peers. In other words, men who were more self-conscious were more apt to be homophobic, as "[college]-aged males who not only are highly sensitive to gender stereotypes, but who also evaluate themselves negatively on a belief that they [do not] fulfill the masculine stereotypes are most likely to hold homophobic attitudes and beliefs" (Theodore & Basow, 2000, p. 42). Therefore, though other communities are impacted, the common thread in policing masculinity has been through enforcing heterosexuality (or perceived heterosexuality) in college men.

Additionally, homophobia is seen by some as a method for male bonding. Several research studies demonstrated that male peers connected and validated each other not

only by denigrating sexually minoritized men but also by separating themselves as exclusively heterosexual (Theodore & Basow, 2000; Woodford et al., 2013). Woodford et al. (2013) surveyed 378 heterosexual undergraduate men and found that such homophobic language was used by participants even when they supported GBQ communities, although they utilized antigay jokes less if they acknowledged having a GBQ friend or acquaintance, suggesting that heterosexual men may unintentionally perpetuate homophobic and misogynistic attitudes when their social networks are limited and homogeneous. Nevertheless, some social contact with individuals of differing sexual orientations may assist in softening bigoted beliefs (Pettigrew, 1998).

Homophobic attitudes can also stem from misogyny. Caswell and Sackett-Fox (2018) surveyed 243 college students in an undergraduate course at a southern university, analyzing how heterosexual college men viewed differences between more traditionally masculine and more traditionally feminine gay men. Researchers found that individuals with more homophobic attitudes generally accepted more masculine gay men and rejected feminine-presenting individuals as deviant. Other studies have found similar findings for how heterosexual men view fellow peers with similar sexual orientations. Reigeluth and Addis (2016) interviewed 30 young men and found that participants—some but not all of whom attended universities—heavily policed their friends' and classmates' adherence to masculine norms: "[Policing of masculinity] operates as a potent social learning framework as boys are able to elevate their status and feel closer to friends, while also reinforcing hegemonic masculinity and patriarchy" (p. 81). In other words, misogyny and the fear of being perceived as feminine are used both to measure

the appropriateness of men's gender performances and to provide some protections and affirmations for gay men who conform to White hegemonic standards.

Internalized Homophobia

White masculinity not only impacts heterosexual cisgender male collegians but also GBQ collegiate men and transmasculine individuals. McCormack et al. (2016) described a *homohysteric culture* as one where

- sexually minoritized people are visible,
- individuals are socialized to be homophobic, and
- there is "a cultural conflation of male femininity and homosexuality" (p. 750).

In other words, queerness and femininity are intertwined and are each seen as something to be feared and loathed by many men and transmasculine individuals, including GBQ individuals. However, some research has suggested that homophobia and misogyny have played slightly different roles in how GBQ men and transmasculine individuals perceive their own identities and how they have interacted with male peers of varying sexual orientations compared to their heterosexual cisgender counterparts (Hale & Ojeda, 2018; McCormack et al., 2016; Morris, 2018). GBQ men and transmasculine individuals are often bombarded with homophobic messages during their childhood and adolescence, and many GBQ individuals internalize these messages and believe them to be true (Murchison et al., 2017).

Consequently, internalized homophobia, internalized biphobia, and internalized transphobia can impact GBQ collegiate students' identity development in several ways.

Murchison et al. (2017) found that internalized homophobia was correlated to higher rates of sexual assault in GBQ men. This study conducted a quantitative survey of 763 college students across the United States who identified as sexual minorities and found that individuals who had unconscious negative bias about one's own sexual orientation were more likely to be sexually harassed or be the target of an unwanted sexual act (Murchison et al., 2017). Gay men may also attempt to separate themselves from femininity as a reaction to internalized misogyny: "Gay men's investment in hegemonic masculinity . . . [and] anxieties around effeminacy within most contemporary Western cultures . . . are both connected to the ways gay male subjectivities try to mourn their ambivalent attachments to femininity" (Hale & Ojeda, 2018, p. 316). And as previously stated, Reigeluth and Addis (2016) demonstrated that many heterosexual cisgender men prefer gay men who conform to hegemonic masculine standards, making it within many gay men's interests to do so.

Moreover, GBQ transgender men and transmasculine individuals are often pressured to conform to hypermasculine standards. For example, Catalano (2015) found that transgender participants were sometimes judged by other transgender men on their perceived masculinity through their use or their nonuse of testosterone and their past history with gender confirmation surgeries; receiving hormones and surgeries sometimes meant being validated as a man by other transgender students. Therefore, an internal loathing of one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity can have significant consequences for whether a GBQ person decides to adhere to more hegemonic standards of masculinity or whether a GBQ person feels freer to resist those norms.

Decreased Homophobia and Embrace of Queerness

Although homophobia is a core component of White masculinity, attitudes toward homosexuality have been generally improving across the United States in recent decades (Anderson, 2009; Branfman et al., 2018). For example, Branfman et al. (2018) conducted a quantitative study of 170 heterosexual undergraduate men from a university in the Midwest to survey their attitudes toward anal sexual intercourse. Some of the men saw the practice as something exclusively done by those who are sexually minoritized, also voicing stigma and disgust at the practice. Conversely, a significant number of those who answered stated they did not have an issue with it, as "declining cultural homophobia has decreased homohysteria in ways that leave cultural narratives about anal eroticism open to new ambiguity, question, and challenge" (Branfman et al., 2018, p. 121). Scoats et al. (2018) also found through qualitative interviews that heterosexual collegiate male participants had more accepting views of same-sex behavior, even normalizing or engaging in such activity themselves despite not identifying as sexual minorities.

With these changing attitudes toward homosexuality—albeit White gay men specifically—Anderson (2009) offered a revised way of thinking about masculinity called inclusive masculinity theory, which framed gender dynamics among men that are "not predicated on homophobia, stoicism or a rejection of the feminine" (Anderson & McCormack, 2018, p. 547). Recent research has shown some declines in homophobic and antifeminine attitudes and behaviors from heterosexual cisgender men, including a willingness by some of those men to engage in homosocial or homosexual behaviors in

more open, authentic ways that do not clash with their masculine identity (Anderson & McCormack, 2018).

Intersections With Racial-Minority Identities

Masculine identity protection becomes more complex when intersected with racial identity (Anderson-Martinez & Vianden, 2014; Chan, 2017; Estrada et al., 2011; F. Harris et al., 2011; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013). Gay men and transmasculine individuals of color often feel alienated, excluded, or ostracized from broader social networks, including those of GBQ White men and transmasculine individuals (Jourian & McCloud, 2020; Strayhorn, 2018). Some racially minoritized men are further pressured to conform to various societal ideals of hegemonic masculinity to compensate for the internalized racism that reduces their sense of agency and power (Estrada et al., 2011; F. Harris et al., 2011; Jourian & McCloud, 2020; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013). Strayhorn and Tillman-Kelly (2013) interviewed 19 Black gay collegiate students about how they perceived their masculinities. Although some discussed resisting heteronormativity or embracing queerness, others talked about their need to adhere to more traditional forms of masculinity in order to be accepted. Chan (2017) conducted interviews with six sexually minoritized Filipino undergraduates, discovering that cultural norms were a dominant force in many of the students' lives, where they felt that they needed "to play more masculine roles," particularly in front of their family (p. 87).

Other GBQ men of color, nevertheless, discussed feeling alienated from the larger sexually minoritized community because of racism, rejecting hegemonic masculine and

homonormative[7] ideals of presentation (Chan, 2017; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013). For example, Jourian and McCloud (2020) discussed that participants in their study—four Black transmasculine collegiate students—had "their masculinities shaped by anti-Blackness, both in and outside of queer and trans spaces" on campus (p. 739). Moreover, Jourian and McCloud found that some campus centers geared toward serving sexual- and gender-minority students often "imposed racialized, binary-perpetuating genders" where students' masculinities were judged as to whether they conformed to hegemonic standards while Black students reported being ostracized for their racial identity (p. 740).

Few studies have focused on the intersection of Whiteness and queer masculinity. Anderson-Martinez and Vianden (2014) looked at White men's attitudes around masculinity; however, this study had no intentional racial analysis. Any emphasis on race, according to the researchers, was because they could only find White subjects for their study. Consequently, although White gay cisgender men can seek some refuge through homonormativity by adopting hegemonic masculine attitudes and behaviors similar to White straight cisgender men, GBQ men and transmasculine individuals of color do not have a similar path of assimilation and must deal with the lived realities of heterosexism, cissexism, and racism.

Validation of Masculinity

GBQ men and transmasculine individuals are impacted by hegemonic standards in a world where structural misogyny, homophobia, and racism exist (Case et al., 2012;

[7] *Homonormativity* refers to gay and lesbian cultural norms that attempt to mirror heteronormative ideals in society, often privileging White upper-class sexual-minority individuals (Denton, 2019).

Jourian & McCloud, 2020). Specifically, many GBQ men and transmasculine individuals have to regulate their masculinity in public to ensure that other men—particularly White heterosexual cisgender men—validate their masculinity or, if applicable, validate them as men in order not only to fit in but also not to be seen as the target of rebuke or violence (Anderson, 2002; Anderson-Martinez & Vianden, 2014; Catalano, 2015; Chan, 2017; Hunt et al., 2016; Sánchez & Vilain, 2012). Whether they conform or do not conform to hegemonic standards of masculinity may impact their sense of self-worth or sense of safety on campus.

Seeking Validation From Others

For many men, manhood is "a precarious state requiring continual social proof and validation" (Vandello et al., 2008, p. 1325). Many men's identities can be dependent upon how others—particularly male peers—validate their masculinity, especially not being viewed as feminine or gay. As a result, men may shift their attitudes and behaviors in the presence of others in order to receive such accolades around their masculine performance. Several studies have demonstrated this, particularly from GBQ men: In order to befriend male peers (of any sexual orientation), GBQ men and transmasculine individuals may adapt more hegemonic masculine standards including lack of emotions, higher levels of aggression, and even homophobic or misogynistic telling of jokes (Catalano, 2015; Hale & Ojeda, 2018; Morris, 2018). Through qualitative interviews with 42 students, Anderson (2002) found that some gay athletes in college—despite being considered to be "accepted" by fellow teammates and coaches for their sexual orientations—made efforts to adhere to hegemonic masculine norms in order to be

acclimated to the team. Anderson-Martinez and Vianden (2014) also found that gay male participants altered their gender presentations to appear more masculine in order to stay safe from real or perceived threats on campus. Nevertheless, the major limitations of Anderson and Anderson-Martinez and Vianden were that they focused solely on White gay men, leaving gaps around how other GBQ students seek or do not seek validation around their masculine identities.

But the need for validation is not just limited to gay cisgender men. Catalano (2015), who interviewed 25 mostly transgender undergraduate students in New England, found that for the transgender men and transmasculine individuals interviewed, passing as masculine[8] was important, as it brought a sense of validation to those students. And being able to connect with others, particularly other cisgender men, was reported by Catalano to be related to confidence in one's ability to pass as a man by others. Moreover, projecting hegemonic masculine attitudes and behaviors sometimes equated to more acceptance by friends on campus (Catalano, 2015; Chan, 2017). This privilege is not afforded to all within the GBQ community: White gay cisgender men or White transgender men who pass often have the luxury to adopt such hegemonic forms of masculinity in order to feel included within environments that they deem potentially homophobic, adhering to homonormative standards for their identity. However, GBQ individuals of color and many other transgender individuals are not often afforded the same abilities, many times having to perform hypermasculinity to be validated as a

[8] To *pass as masculine* means not having others question or doubt whether one is masculine in one's gender presentation (Catalano, 2015).

contemporary among other GBQ individuals or heterosexual cisgender men on campus (Catalano, 2015; Jourian, 2017; Jourian & McCloud, 2020; Strayhorn, 2018). As a result, masculinity performance has been utilized as a tool by some GBQ men in order to seek the acceptance of primarily heterosexual cisgender men.

Oppressive Attitudes and Behaviors

Oppressive attitudes and behaviors manifested by non-GBQ students have profound impacts on sexually minoritized men and transmasculine individuals, especially GBQ people of color. According to Rankin et al. (2010), 31% of sexually minoritized students have experienced hostility on their campuses, and 21% experienced harassment as a direct result of their sexual orientation or gender identity. GBQ students of color were "more likely than their . . . White counterparts to indicate race as the basis for harassment [but] sexual identity . . . was the primary risk factor for harassment for both" (Rankin et al., 2010, p. 11). GBQ students of color were more likely to be targeted than GBQ White students for harassment and discrimination on their campuses, including targeting from GBQ White students (Duran, 2019). GBQ students who are first-generation also have reported more hostile climates than GBQ students who have had at least one parent previously graduate from a postsecondary institution (Garvey et al., 2014). Moreover, GBQ transgender men and transmasculine individuals have experienced campuses that often have perpetuated "binary and static" notions of gender, with some students hesitant or fearful to come out as transgender on campus due to safety concerns (Seelman, 2014, p. 188).

Nevertheless, GBQ students not only are the targets of such incidents but also have the potential to perpetuate racist, misogynistic, and homophobic behaviors and attitudes on campus. But scant research exists on the reasons or motivations for why these students would behave in these manners (Garvey et al., 2014), though some literature—focused on White gay men—would suggest it would be to fit in with their heterosexual cisgender peers (Anderson-Martinez & Vianden, 2014). And participating in oppressive behaviors themselves makes some sexually minoritized students feel less vulnerable to homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic attacks, either verbally or physically.

Gendered On-Campus Facilities

GBQ transgender men and transmasculine individuals also face unique challenges within postsecondary educational environments that their GBQ cisgender counterparts do not necessarily encounter around the use of institutional facilities. For example, the National Transgender Discrimination Survey found that out of a sample size of 2,772 individuals who attended college or university campuses as transgender, 19% and 23.9% were "not allowed to access gender-appropriate housing" and "appropriate bathrooms and other facilities" at their institutions, respectively (Seelman, 2014, p. 198). Moreover, a significant number of respondents indicated that although they used gender-appropriate facilities, their safety was often in question from others using those facilities, including receiving hostile looks, hearing discriminatory language, and fearing and even experiencing violence from peers and strangers (Seelman, 2014). Having to worry about basic needs around living, showering, and taking care of bodily needs adds undue stressors and worries to transgender students that are not necessarily shared in the same

ways by their cisgender peers. In turn, some GBQ transgender undergraduate students plan their daily routines on their campuses to ensure their personal physical and psychological safety.

Treatment of Mental Health

The need from many men to be validated in their masculinity by others (and themselves) extends to their mental health. Some studies have been conducted to understand how GBQ men and transmasculine individuals view treatment of mental health in relation to hegemonic masculinity. Research has found that many gay and bisexual men who adhere to hegemonic standards of masculinity have a more difficult time with coping and treatment of mental health issues—namely depression and anxiety—as they do not want to appear weak or out of control (Fischgrund et al., 2012; Pachankis et al., 2018). Pachankis et al. (2018) interviewed 128 GBQ collegiate men (though 121 identified as *gay* or *mostly gay*), finding that men who adhered to more feminine standards of gender presentation were abler to cope and to come to terms with mental health issues than those who observed more hegemonic masculine standards. Additionally, men who adopted more hegemonic norms around masculinity sometimes made attempts to conceal their mental health issues in an effort not to be seen as feminine (Pachankis et al., 2018). Fischgrund et al. (2012) interviewed gay and bisexual men in New York City gyms, finding that higher levels of depression and anxiety were correlated to a stronger endorsement of hegemonic masculine ideals, particularly around projecting strength and power.

Additional research has shown that adhering to hegemonic masculine standards—particularly for GBQ transgender men of color and GBQ transmasculine individuals of color—has a significant negative impact on the health of undergraduate students, making students feel as if they need to choose between (a) their own identities and (b) their performances of masculinity that are internally harmful to them but provide external validation by others (Jourian & McCloud, 2020). Thus, research has shown that White masculinity has some impact on the attitudes and treatment behaviors of GBQ men's mental health. These studies do have their limitations; bisexual and queer men are often low or nonexistent in sample sizes, as are men of color, transgender men, and transmasculine individuals.

Competition With Other Men

Competition among men is commonplace in order to ascertain one's alignment with hegemonic standards of masculinity compared to others, with those conforming most being rewarded with validation, praise, and safety from their surrounding environment (Kimmel, 2008; O'Neil et al., 1986). One of the ways that this competition occurs is through comparing one's sexual activity among other men. Sex can be considered to be a status marker and a cultural achievement among heterosexual cisgender men in college, particularly those who idealize White masculinities (Fleming & Davis, 2018). Specifically, engaging in sexual relations with women—particularly multiple women over a shorter period—is seen by a number of undergraduate heterosexual cisgender men to be something that can elevate one's social status, the

procurement of friends, respect, and one's positive reputation in the broader community on campus (Reling et al., 2018).

These attitudes have created what is known as *hookup culture* on many college campuses, or the existence of "a social environment that encourages sexual contact free from the binds of commitment or emotional intimacy" (Reling et al., 2018, p. 502). Such cultures can breed attitudes in many men who believe not only that casual sex is permissible or common but also that heterosexual men are deserving of sex with women (Jozkowski & Wiersma-Mosley, 2017). Men are expected to "[possess] enough sexual prowess to please and attract partners, which introduces . . . social and interpersonal anxiety around heterosexual initiation and using sex with women to protect a sense of masculinity" (Fleming & Davis, 2018, p. 227). Bartolucci et al. (2009) found that men who adhere to more hegemonic standards of masculinity felt more confident about both pursuing women sexually and disclosing that information to friends. Men, therefore, who are believed to have engaged in heterosexual activity with other women are sometimes seen as masculine role models for fellow men due to their "success" in how they should act in accordance with particular gender roles.

When men do not meet this ideal of hegemonic masculine gender performance, the result can be humiliating. Fleming and Davis (2018) conducted qualitative interviews with 10 men at a single university to understand how they viewed sexual activity within the context of their gender performances and identities. Men in the study described being *virgin-shamed*, or when one is "[criticized] or [belittled] for their virgin status" or low number of sexual partners (Fleming & Davis, 2018, p. 227). Virgin-shaming other men

gave those men doing it a sense of power and success over their masculine identity, whereas those who were the targets of such berating often felt confused, frustrated, or angry in how they and others perceived their gender (Fleming & Davis, 2018).

Others have taken more drastic actions. For example, several studies have demonstrated that some men often lie about their sexual pursuits and successes for the purposes of popularity and validation by peers (Fleming & Davis, 2018; Foste & Davis, 2018). Additionally, some men have pursued sex with women but without regard to safety or consent, utilizing coercion tactics such as alcohol and guilting to succeed in having sexual relations (Bartolucci et al., 2009; Fleming & Davis, 2018; Reling et al., 2018). These decisions have often confused men about their values and morals in relation to their gender identity development, as well as have placed women at higher risk for sexual assault. Therefore, adherence to White masculinity can impact how men view, discuss, and engage with sex, including the potential to harm women and fellow male peers.

Some research has been conducted to assess how GBQ men and transmasculine individuals view themselves sexually as a result of the influence of White masculinity (Dunn, 2012; Lanzieri & Hildebrandt, 2011; Moskowitz & Hart, 2011). Gay men can sometimes associate their own and others' masculinities with muscularity, athleticism, and anal-sex preferences (i.e., bottom, top, versatile, or disinterested; Lanzieri & Hildebrandt, 2011; Moskowitz & Hart, 2011). Some GBQ people of color—in order to conform to such hegemonic standards of masculinity on campus—must exaggerate their masculine performance, "taking on hypersexualized and heteronormative views" of what

it means to be masculine (Jourian & McCloud, 2020, p. 744). Other GBQ men and transmasculine individuals find themselves engaging in sexual activity—sometimes practicing unsafe sex—in order to fit in with the larger sexual-minority community on campus (Strayhorn, 2018). This competition among men is inherently tied to *rape culture*, which is "the mechanism that channels toxic masculinity into specific, socially legitimized practices of sexual violence" on college campuses (Posadas, 2017, p. 178).

Additionally, unlike their heterosexual peers, GBQ men are disproportionately more likely to be victimized by sexual violence. Mellins et al. (2017) conducted a quantitative survey on 9,616 undergraduate students from two universities on the East Coast, finding that students who identified as nonheterosexual were more likely to experience sexual assault, especially nonheterosexual men. However, Dunn (2012) interviewed 25 gay men and found that those who adhered to more hegemonic forms of masculinity often resisted being seen as a victim, as *victimhood* was associated by participants with femininity and weakness. Although exact statistics are unknown for how many GBQ men and transmasculine individuals experience sexual assault within their postsecondary education, emerging research has shown that male students who identify as GBQ are more likely to be the target of sexual assault on campuses than male students who identify as heterosexual and cisgender (Mellins et al., 2017). Mellins et al. also found that men—of all sexual orientations—who experience rape or assault were less likely to report such incidents out of fear of humiliation and degradation of their masculine identity to peers and administrators. Moreover, the Centers for Disease Control estimate that over 40% of gay and bisexual men have been the targets of sexual

misconduct, not including rape, though no statistics were provided for queer men or transmasculine individuals of any sexual orientation (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2010). Consequently, there are ways that hegemonic masculinities impact GBQ men and transmasculine individuals in regard to how they view each other and how they view themselves, including in the aftermath of an assault.

Understanding how masculine identity impacts GBQ men's and transmasculine individuals' adherence to rape culture on campus would be important to know for higher education administrators tackling this issue. And taking sexual assault programming seriously requires that interventions include involving key stakeholders across campus, implementing behavioral-modification strategies to focus on those who are most likely to assault, and discussing power dynamics and assumptions around hegemonic masculinity (Senn, 2011; Wagner & Tillapaugh, 2018). Comprehensive sexual assault prevention requires programming that includes GBQ collegiate men and transmasculine individuals within its focus, as these communities' perspectives and challenges are often omitted from many campuses' interventions. Therefore, although institutions have implemented a number of programs and policies to tackle the challenges around the disproportionate number of sexual assaults on campuses, research has found that such initiatives have marginal success among heterosexual cisgender populations of students.

At this time, virtually nothing is known about how these efforts are impacting GBQ students on campuses. Despite these studies, little research has been done to assess how White masculinity impacts the ways GBQ collegiate men and transmasculine individuals have used sex as a masculinity status symbol, and little to no research has

included bisexual men, queer men, GBQ men of color, or GBQ transgender men and transmasculine individuals.

Limitations of Existing Research

Theoretical models and research on masculine identity development on undergraduate men over the past 4 decades has predominantly focused on and based its groundwork within the White heterosexual cisgender male community, impacting the research that has been conducted and the resulting policies and programs that have since been implemented and enacted, respectively, on various campuses across the United States. As a result, the aforementioned research in this literature review is limited in a number of ways. First, most of the research surrounding internalized homophobia and biphobia has been conducted specifically on gay men or—when covered more broadly to include bisexual men, queer men, and GBQ transmasculine individuals—often does not break down specific demographic categories within the data analyzed (Anderson, 2002; Estrada et al., 2011; Hale & Ojeda, 2018; Morris, 2018; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013). Little is known about how bisexual men, queer men, and GBQ transmasculine individuals are specifically impacted by homophobia and biphobia with respect to their masculine identity development. Therefore, these studies tell higher education researchers little about the broader GBQ community.

Second, much of the research conducted on undergraduate GBQ men and transmasculine individuals has been qualitative, and most larger quantitative studies have focused overwhelmingly on undergraduate heterosexual cisgender men. Because the research that focused on GBQ undergraduate communities has had small sample sizes

and has utilized nonprobability sampling methods—with much of this research focusing on more homogenous or limited communities—this research cannot be used to generalize the larger GBQ population or subpopulations within it (Anderson, 2002; Anderson-Martinez & Vianden, 2014; Chan, 2017; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013).

Third, transgender men's and transmasculine individuals' experiences have often been assumed to mirror GBQ cisgender men's experiences, despite little research on transgender communities regarding masculinities in higher education (Catalano, 2015). These experiences cannot be expected to be the same, especially knowing how transgender undergraduate students disproportionately experience bias and discrimination in comparison to their GBQ cisgender student counterparts (Greathouse et al., 2018; Rankin et al., 2010).

Finally, unless a study focused specifically on a racially minoritized community, much of the research conducted was not racially inclusive and mainly focused on White gay cisgender men (Anderson, 2002; Anderson-Martinez & Vianden, 2014). Although several studies did include GBQ racial minorities, these were qualitative and often limited in their demographic scope (Chan, 2017; Jourian, 2017; Jourian & McCloud, 2020; Strayhorn, 2018; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013).

Need for Further Research on GBQ Undergraduate Students

College is a significant formative period for many male and transmasculine undergraduate students' development around how they understand themselves and their relationship both to masculinity and to systems of gender. Development can be shaped not only around how a student perceives themselves but also around how they wish to be

perceived and accepted by others. This need for affirmation has resulted in many undergraduate GBQ men and transmasculine individuals striving to adapt to an ideal hegemonic form of masculinity, also known as White masculinity (Hughey, 2012, 2014; Kimmel, 2008). Although there are multiple manifestations of masculinities (Anderson, 2009), collegiate men and transmasculine individuals are often policed by fellow peers for their adherence to or deviation from this hegemonic masculine standard, which devalues femininity and queerness, emphasizes competition and comparison among male peers, and emphasizes conformity to hegemonic masculinity for validation, particularly among transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals (Catalano, 2015; F. Harris, 2010; Jourian, 2017; O'Neil et al., 1986; Pleck, 1995).

Systems of White masculinity play a large role in how many GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals come to make understanding of their identities. These systems also influence how GBQ men and transmasculine individuals formulate their masculinities and view their own sexuality and queerness. Knowing that GBQ individuals develop in a society that is inherently racist, sexist, and heterosexist (Denton, 2019; J. C. Harris & Poon, 2019; Robbins, 2019), it can be understood why many men and transmasculine individuals—of any sexual orientation—utilize racism, misogyny, and homophobia as weapons against others. Understanding how GBQ men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their identities within the context of White masculinity in systems of higher education may help student affairs practitioners develop proper interventions when addressing bias or discrimination on campuses. Moreover, it can also assist practitioners in comprehending why GBQ men and transmasculine

individuals would adopt such ideologies and enact such behaviors. Understanding how White masculinity impacts racial and gender identity development can also provide higher education professionals with tools to program and to engage in discussions with students utilizing intersectional frameworks, understanding that students have multiple identities (Case et al., 2012).

More research must be conducted on GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals to understand their relationship to masculine identity development in the context of a society that values adherence to toxic-masculinity performances. Decades of research has demonstrated a correlation between conformity to White masculinities and beliefs and practices rooted in racism, misogyny, queerphobia, and other forms of oppression (Corprew et al., 2014; Theodore & Basow, 2000). And although emerging literature shows that some GBQ men and transmasculine individuals struggle in their masculine identity development—particularly around antifeminine and internalized homophobic attitudes (Murchison et al., 2017)—less is certain around how GBQ men and transmasculine individuals conform or do not conform to traditional hegemonic standards within higher education. Additional qualitative research can explore the narratives of GBQ collegiate men and transmasculine individuals to help understand how White masculinity impacts their meaning making and lived experiences, as well as how their narratives compare to heterosexual cisgender men in higher education.

This current study utilizes a queer phenomenological research design to explore how sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculinity through their undergraduate collegiate experience. Hearing and

understanding the perspectives of participants—specifically how GBQ undergraduate students understand their identities through a lens of White masculinity—aims to provide student affairs practitioners and researchers with the tools, skills, and resources required to navigate issues of identity development among sexually minoritized populations in higher education.

Chapter 3:

Methods

This investigation aimed to understand how sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculine identities within the context of their undergraduate experiences within postsecondary institutions. As is described below, the study utilized a queer phenomenological research design in which eligible participants were selected using purposive sampling. Participants were interviewed during two 1- to 2-hr semistructured meetings consisting of both (a) predetermined questions pertaining to how they understood their identities within and outside the context of higher education and (b) follow-up and probing questions that were based off of the participants' responses. Interviews were recorded with the participants' consent, and transcriptions were typed utilizing delineated technologies and manual checks by the researcher.

The data underwent a critical thematic analysis using inductive content analysis to look for themes that underlined how participants experienced hegemonic masculinity as sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals. Quotations were selected to exemplify and to highlight those themes in order to tell a coherent story about the participants' perspectives. Participants were also given the chance to engage in member checking by (a) having a chance to hear and to respond to a summary of researcher notes from their first interview at the beginning of the final interview and (b) completing an online survey in response to the preliminary themes and subthemes that the researcher

had identified following several rounds of coding of all the interview transcripts (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

This study took precautions to adhere to all ethical standards, including the use of informed consent, participant confidentiality, and data privacy. Despite the limitations in using this type of research design and sampling technique, quality checks were conducted during the study through the use of Guba and Lincoln's (1985) criteria of bolstering qualitative research trustworthiness, as well as the use of de Witt and Ploeg's (2006) criteria for evaluating the rigor of phenomenological studies.

Research Design

In this study, I aimed to answer the following research question: How do sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculine identity within the context of their experience at an undergraduate postsecondary institution? Although the adverb "how" usually refers to means of process, this was not the intent of my research question. I did not look at the process of masculine identity formation; instead, I was interested in the ways sexual-minority undergraduate men make meaning of their masculinities within their college context.

Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the aforementioned terms within the research question were defined as follows:

- **sexual minority** or **sexual-minority person**: a man or transmasculine individual who is sexually or romantically attracted to other men or gender-nonconforming individuals or engages in sexual activity with other men or gender-

nonconforming[9] individuals. Such individuals may be attracted to just men, just gender-nonconforming people, or multiple genders (including women). They may also not identify as sexual minorities but still have and engage in the aforementioned feelings and behaviors, respectively, with men and gender-nonconforming people (Young & Meyer, 2005).

- **man**: someone who identifies as a man, regardless of the sex that they were assigned at birth.
- **transmasculine individual**: someone who was assigned female sex at birth who identifies as a "diverse nonbinary gender identity on the masculine spectrum" (Reisner et al., 2018, p. 2).
- **undergraduate postsecondary institution**: a college or university that confers associate degrees and/or bachelor's degrees (W3 Education, n.d.).
- **masculine identity**: how individuals "[organize] experiences [of being a man] within the environment . . . that revolves around [themselves]" (Torres et al., 2009, p. 577).

Ontology and Epistemology

I applied a critical theoretical framework in my approach for analysis for this research, specifically utilizing a combination of critical masculinity theory and critical race theory in understanding White masculinity. This approach was used because I believe it is crucial to understand how issues of power and hegemonic norms influence

[9] A *gender-nonconforming individual* is someone who identifies or expresses outside of the man–woman binary (Pachankis & Hatzenbuehler, 2013).

the lived experiences of minoritized undergraduate students, including sexually minoritized men and transmasculine individuals. Through this critical framework, my ontology—how I see the nature of reality—is one that understands historical and current trends; that is, although I believe reality is socially constructed, I believe that it is influenced by historical forces and social structures and that one's reality cannot be separated from those contexts (Newman, 1992). My epistemology—how I see the nature of knowledge—is subjectivist; that is, I believe that knowledge is created and shaped from within contexts, and there are multiple sources of knowledge. Critical theory also suggests that hegemonic ideologies impact the sources of individuals' knowledge (Guenther, 2020; Newman, 1992). Consequently, my values around equity and access in higher education dictate how I approach my inquiry into this topic. For example, I believe that issues of power and privilege cannot be ignored within research inquiries; thus, these values dictate my utilization of critical theories in this research.

Finally, my methodology is inductive and transformational in nature. I hope to understand how sexually minoritized undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals comprehend and explore their masculinity—particularly within the context of White masculine hegemonic norms—while also hoping to raise participants' consciousness around such norms (Newman, 1992). Thus, my investigation benefited most from a critical qualitative analysis approach that allowed participants to share their experiences while also encouraging them to reflect on what they learned about themselves through this interview process (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). As a result, I chose to utilize queer phenomenology. As described below, a queer phenomenological approach is one

that attempts to understand how participants orient themselves to hegemonic systems of power within society and how they have made meaning around both conforming to and resisting such systems (Ahmed, 2006). This research method allowed me to understand how interviewees made meaning around their identities while acknowledging the socially oppressive forces that impacted how they saw themselves and interacted with the world around them (Ahmed, 2006; Guenther, 2020; Jourian, 2017).

Queer Phenomenology

This study employed a queer phenomenological research design. Phenomenology attempts to understand how individuals experience and make meaning of the world around them, usually through analyzing a specific phenomenon (Langdridge, 2017). To utilize such an approach, two criteria must be met in that (a) researchers must ask a research question that attempts to capture individuals' lived experiences, and (b) the data collected and analyzed must be rooted in participant experience. Classical phenomenology attempts to take a neutral stance to research, where researchers strive to "[approach] any object of study in a systematic way, with an attempt to encounter the object in a fresh and unbiased way" (Langdridge, 2017, p. 170). Researchers must strive for *epoché*, meaning "setting aside prior . . . scientific understanding" and "moving from the natural attitude to . . . [the] experience itself " (Langdridge, 2017, p. 171). Therefore, prior theoretical frameworks are generally not used when developing research questions or methods utilizing a classical phenomenological approach.

However, unlike classical methodologies, queer phenomenology is a critical approach that "calls [people's] attention to the ways that lived experiences of bodies,

objects, and the world are shaped by power relations and histories of power," (Heyes et al., 2016, p. 141). In this case, the lived experiences are those that sexual-minority undergraduate men have within postsecondary institutions, and the power relations in question are those of cisheteronormativity, masculinity, and White supremacy that coalesce to form White masculinity (Guilmette, 2020; Searle, 2019). Ahmed (2006), who is considered a founder of queer phenomenology, described people—or *bodies*—as "shaped by histories, which they perform in their comportment, their posture, and their gestures" (p. 552). Each person has an *orientation*, which describes one's relationship to society and the power structures at play (Guilmette, 2020).

Queer phenomenology attempts to unearth meaning from participants' lives in the context of hegemonic structures of power by understanding *queer moments* in their lives (Guilmette, 2020), or moments where they have attempted to resist oppressive systems. This methodology "concerns itself with orientation and the revelations of how queerness disrupts and disorients accepted paths and directions dictated by social relations" (Jourian, 2017, p. 250). In other words, this methodology seeks to understand how individuals follow the scripts set forth by dominant society (i.e., through hegemonic systems), as well as how and why individuals deviate from such scripts. Queer phenomenology also attempts to provide participants an opportunity to become aware of one's orientation toward the world—something of which many individuals are unaware—and situate their own attitudes and behaviors within the context of histories of power (Ahmed, 2006). Such a research method also requires reflexivity from the researcher in order for them to understand how their orientation toward the world shapes

their approach to the development, implementation, and analysis of the research itself (Guenther, 2020). Queer phenomenology is a research method approach that provides an opportunity to explore participants' meaning around the topic of masculinity in the context of the college experience while also acknowledging the historic and current role that systems of White masculinity play within higher education.

Utilizing queer phenomenology in this study was important because, unlike classical phenomenology, it allowed me to ascertain how participants made meaning of their masculinity within their collegiate experiences without setting aside assumptions around the impacts that systems of power and oppression have within their lives. Instead, participants' narratives were understood in the context of hegemonic systems of masculinity, Whiteness, and cisheteronormativity rather than in the absence of them.

My identity as a gay man was also an asset utilizing a queer phenomenological research design. My own meaning making around my identity as a gay man has shaped how I have viewed and have interacted with the world, and this perspective influences how I have approached my research and my interactions with participants, including appreciating the narratives that they shared with me. Sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals can be more hesitant to participate in qualitative research due to privacy and confidentiality concerns, as well as potential distrust for whether the researchers will use their data to harm the broader GBQ community (Meyer & Wilson, 2009). Being a gay man may have provided an advantage in that I could have been seen as a trusted person with which to engage in conversations around these topics. However, my White and cisgender identities may have been a barrier in interviewing students of

color and transgender students in that they may have not seen me as a trustworthy person for research or with which to disclose personal information. To counter these issues, I both (a) engaged in reflexive practices by being critical of each step of the research process in terms of why and how I was engaging in the practices with which I was and (b) named my identities as a researcher with participants at the start of interviewing to acknowledge power dynamics present in order to build trust and rapport with participants.

Sampling

The units of analysis were individual students. Specifically, in order to qualify to partake in this study, the inclusion criteria required that participants

1. be 18–24 years old,
2. attend a postsecondary institution as an undergraduate student within the state of Minnesota,
3. identify as a man or as transmasculine,
4. be sexually or romantically attracted to or engaged in sexual activity with other men or gender-nonconforming people,
5. speak English,
6. have the cognitive ability to consent to participate in this research, and
7. not be incarcerated.

Criterion 1 was established because those 18–24 years old who are enrolled in postsecondary education are considered by NCES (n.d.) to be “traditionally aged.” Moreover, brain development begins to change in one’s midtwenties, with impulse

control increasing and susceptibility to peer influence decreasing (Jetha & Segalowitz, 2012). Criterion 2 was established because of my connections to higher education professionals in the state of Minnesota who work with sexual-minority undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals. Through these connections, I hoped to be able to elicit more participants for my study. I selected Minnesota because I believed this would help participating students find some common ground with me, and in turn, I hoped that they would be more willing to connect with me as a researcher. Moreover, conducting the study across the state (rather than in one community only) would provide opportunities to search for a wider array of participants and perspectives. Depending on various factors (e.g., geographical location, institution type, other social identities, etc.), sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals face significantly different experiences. Criteria 3 and 4 were established as a function of the research question. Criterion 5 was established because most institutions of higher education require enrolled students to be proficient in English (Desruisseaux, 1998); moreover, as an English speaker myself, I wanted to make sure that I was able to communicate with participants. Finally, Criteria 6 and 7 were established based on the need for participants to be able to consent fully to engage in this research.

Sampling Procedure

I utilized purposive sampling, a form of nonprobabilistic sampling where researchers select and interview participants who would best fit the study and be able to give the most relevant information (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015; Polkinghorne, 2005). I did this based on the referrals of individuals who work with sexual-minority

undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals in higher education. Postsecondary institutions selected were affiliated with the University of Minnesota System (n.d.), Minnesota State (n.d.) system, and the Minnesota Private Colleges system (Minnesota Private College Council, n.d.; see Appendix A).

I emailed 86 individual contacts from 41 postsecondary institutions in the state of Minnesota, including

- professional staff who worked at LGBTQIA+ resource offices or multicultural resource offices;
- staff or faculty who advised LGBTQIA+ student organizations;
- the general emails of LGBTQIA+ student organizations and multicultural student organizations;
- directors or coordinators of student activity departments; and
- chairs of gender and sexuality studies departments, race and ethnicity studies departments, and other departments that have a focus around social justice studies.

The aforementioned individuals were chosen because of their relative closer proximity to sexual-minority undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals on college campuses. In these emails, I included the purpose of and information about the study and asked them to forward this request to individuals who they believed would be interested in this research (see Appendix B). Because I worked at Augsburg University at the time of data collection, no contacts were emailed at that institution; instead, paper flyers were posted on that campus for participant recruitment.

Sample Size

There is not necessarily a set number of individuals who are required to be interviewed in a study that employs a critical phenomenological research design. Instead, the quality of data is what matters, and interviews should occur until the researcher believes that they have hit a saturation point and would not find much new in another person's experience from what others have been saying (Sandelowski, 1995). However, an appropriate range of interviewees for a phenomenological study is generally six to ten (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015; Sandelowski, 1995). In turn, I interviewed no fewer than six participants for this study, and I attempted to recruit participants who held different social identities around sexuality and race, as I wanted to understand participants' experiences with making meaning of their masculinity in the context of different systems of power, especially in light of prevailing systems of White masculinity that influence much of undergraduate men's and transmasculine individuals' sense of masculine identity (Edwards & Jones, 2009; Foubert et al., 2007; Jourian, 2017; Jourian & McCloud, 2020; Kimmel, 2008).

Methods of Data Collection

Data collection proceeded from August 3, 2020, to December 16, 2020, through the use of recruitment emails, participant interviews, and a member check survey.

Recruitment Materials

I began to conduct outreach in August 2020; however, most outreach was done throughout September 2020 when classes were back in session. Recruitment materials consisted of emails (see Appendix B), which included the purpose of the study,

participant inclusion criteria, the time commitment of participants, benefits and risks for participation, my email information for details on how to participate in the study, and a flyer. These materials were sent out between August 3, 2020, and October 12, 2020, to the aforementioned offices, departments, and student organizations.

Obtaining Measures

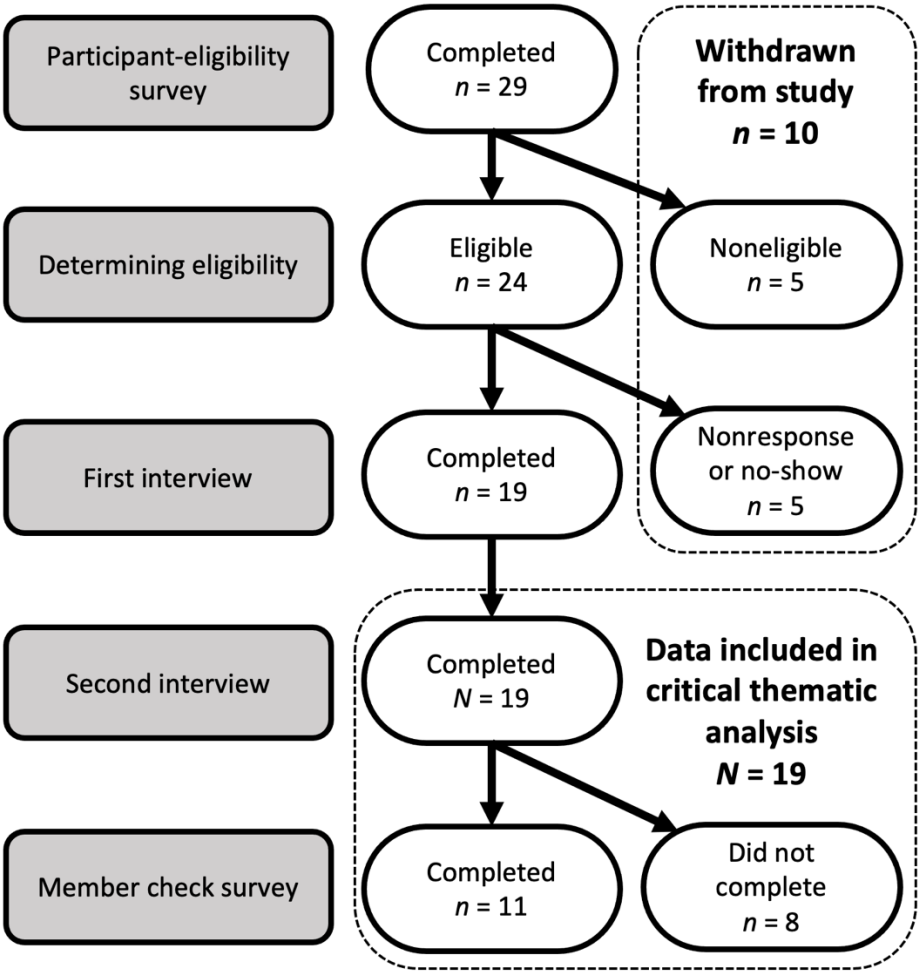
Twenty-nine people completed a participant-eligibility survey that contained a number of screening questions (see Table C1; Figure 1 illustrates the flow of participants in the study). Five individuals did not qualify for the study, as

- three did not meet Criteria 3 and 4;
- one did not meet Criterion 4; and
- one did not meet Criterion 6.

Twenty-four individuals were contacted to inquire about scheduling an interview, 19 of whom responded. Thirty-eight interviews among 19 participants took place between August 17, 2020, and November 9, 2020. All interviews took place over Zoom. The first interviews lasted between 53 and 91 min, with an average length of 69 min; the second interviews lasted between 41 and 81 min, with an average length of 60 min. One participant sent an email addendum expanding upon their answers from their first interview that they consented to have be a part of the data collection.

Figure 1

Participant Flow in Study



Note. Participants were eligible for data analysis in this study if they completed both interviews; they did not have to complete the member check survey for inclusion in data analysis. Saturation was reached after 19 participants finished two interviews.

I stopped after 19 participants, as I believed that I had attained saturation through both (a) relatively fair representation among diverse subcommunities (i.e., bisexual, gay, queer, etc.) among sexual-minority men and transmasculine individuals, including GBQ people of color and (b) no new information being reported by participants. A member check survey (see Table C2) was sent to all 19 participants on December 2, 2020, and was open for 14 days; 11 participants completed the survey.

Participant Demographics

The students who were interviewed varied in identities (see Table 1), including

- sexual orientation (three identified as bisexual; one, as demisexual[10] and gay; nine, as gay; and six, as queer),
- gender identity (12 identified as cisgender men; three, as transgender men; and four, as transmasculine individuals),
- race (two identified as Latino; one, as Middle Eastern–North African; five, as Multiracial; and 11, as White),
- institution type (six attended a private institution; and 13, a public institution),
- class year (three identified as first-years; nine, as sophomores; five, as juniors; and two, as seniors), and
- geographic area (eight attended institutions within the Minneapolis–Saint Paul metropolitan area [i.e., metro]; and 11, outside of it [i.e., rural]).

[10] *Demisexual* is a sexual identity for "a person who experiences sexual attraction only after forming an intimate bond" with another person (Hille et al., 2020, p. 813).

Table 1

Study Participants and Member Check Findings

Pseudonym (pronouns [a])	Sexual orientation	Gender identity	Racial identity	Religious identity	Class status	Institution type	Region [b]	Member check [c]
Adam (he)	Queer	Cisgender man	White	Christian	First-year	Private	Metro	—
Aiden (they/he)	Queer	Transmasculine nonbinary	Latino	—	Junior	Public	Metro	All themes
Anthony (he)	Bisexual	Cisgender man	White	Jewish	Sophomore	Private	Metro	—
Austin (he)	Gay	Cisgender man	White	Christian	Junior	Public	Metro	Subtheme 2A; Themes 3, 4
Benjamin (he)	Bisexual	Cisgender man	White	—	Sophomore	Public	Rural	All themes
Carter (he)	Gay	Cisgender man	Asian and White	—	Sophomore	Private	Rural	All themes
Diego (he)	Gay	Cisgender man	Latino	Christian	Junior	Public	Metro	All themes
Garrett (he)	Gay	Cisgender man	White	Christian	Sophomore	Public	Rural	—
Ibrahim (he)	Queer	Cisgender man	MENA [d]	Muslim	Senior	Public	Rural	All themes
Jay (they)	Gay	Transmasculine nonbinary	White	—	Junior	Private	Rural	All themes
Liam (he)	Demisexual and gay	Transgender man	White	—	First-year	Public	Rural	All themes

Pseudonym (pronouns) [a]	Sexual orientation	Gender identity	Racial identity	Religious identity	Class status	Institution type	Region [b]	Member check [c]
Lucas (they/he)	Queer	Transmasculine queer [e]	White	—	Sophomore	Public	Metro	All themes
Mitchell (he)	Gay	Transgender man	Asian and White	—	Sophomore	Private	Metro	—
Natanael (he)	Queer	Cisgender man	Black and Asian	—	Junior	Private	Metro	—
Peter (he)	Gay	Cisgender man	White and Asian [f]	—	Sophomore	Public	Rural	—
Rhett (he)	Gay	Cisgender man	White	—	Sophomore	Public	Rural	—
Samuel (he)	Queer	Transgender man	Asian and Hispanic	Buddhist	Senior	Public	Rural	All themes
Taylor (they)	Bisexual	Transmasculine genderqueer	White	—	First-year	Public	Rural	—
William (he)	Gay	Cisgender man	White	—	Sophomore	Public	Rural	Subthemes 1A, 1B; Themes 2, 3, 4

Note. Participants were able to self-identify in terms of their sexual orientation, gender identity, racial identity, and religious identity (rather than selecting from a predetermined list); class status was also based on self-identification, not necessarily credits earned at their respective institutions. The names used in this study are pseudonyms. "—" means participant did not provide data.

[a] Nominative pronouns are listed. [b] Metro = institution within the seven-county Minneapolis–Saint Paul metropolitan area (i.e., Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington Counties; Minnesota State Demographic Center, 2016); Rural = institution outside of this metropolitan area. [c] See Appendix D for the list of preliminary themes and subthemes (e.g., Subtheme 2B) sent to participants. [d] MENA = Middle Eastern–North African. [e] Lucas had identified as a transgender man in the interviews; they identified as transmasculine queer in the member check survey, having recently come out. [f] Although identifying as having Asian ancestry, Peter primarily identified as White.

Seven participants disclosed their current religious identity (one identified as Buddhist; four, as Christian; one, as Jewish; one, as Muslim; and 12 did not disclose), and one participant disclosed that they were an undocumented refugee. Participants represented seven postsecondary institutions in Minnesota but were nearly split among

- the University of Minnesota system (six),
- the Minnesota State system (seven), and
- the Minnesota Private Colleges system (six).

Two individuals attended same-sex institutions. Seventeen participants started college at their current postsecondary institution; two participants started college at an institution that was different from the one at which they were at the time of the interviews and then transferred, including one who had attended a two-year community and technical college in Minnesota.

Initial Contact and Preparation for First Interview

Interested participants completed a participant-eligibility survey (see Table C1). Individuals were required to meet all eligibility requirements to participate. If an individual did not qualify for eligibility, the survey's logic informed them that they did not meet criteria for eligibility and thanked them for their interest in the research. However, if the individual was eligible, I received an automated email that a survey had been completed that included information on how to contact that person. I would then contact that person via email or phone (depending on which method they indicated that they preferred in the participant-eligibility survey) to determine if they wanted to participate in an initial interview and, if so, for when they would like to schedule an interview. If the individual expressed interest in an interview, I responded with a confirmation email of the interview date and time and included a copy of both the consent script and the first set of interview questions (see Appendices E and F).

All questions were chosen because of the queer phenomenological research design that I employed. These questions allowed participants to reflect on how they made meaning of their identities within the context of the world around them, specifically on their campuses with friends, acquaintances, peers, and classmates, among others; more importantly, it allowed participants to define what they considered what had been scripted for them in terms of their masculinity, as well as how they may have conformed or deviated from these scripts (Ahmed, 2006). Although I anticipated other parts of identity would come up organically from participants, I asked about racial identity specifically (and not others) because of the tendency of White individuals to avoid

conversations about their racial identity (Diangelo, 2012). White individuals often do not see themselves as having a narrative or experience around their race—or fear having conversations about race—and consequently may avoid racial conversations unless directly asked to do so (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Cabrera et al., 2016; Diangelo, 2012). One day before the interview, I emailed again with the information about the Zoom interview, including the link, password, and alternative phone number to the meeting.

First Meeting

For the first meeting, I met with each participant over Zoom for 1 to 2 hr. I asked for consent to begin recording (see Table E1); all participants consented. Upon doing so, I began to record the interview via Zoom on my MacBook Pro, and I went over the consent script (see Appendix E) and asked for each participant's consent to be a part of the study (see Table E2); all participants consented. I then asked the questions for the first interview (see Appendix F), as well as follow-up and probing questions that were determined by the content and context of each participant's answers (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In addition to recording the interview, I also took notes in order to help myself formulate probing and follow-up questions.

At the end of the first interview, I

- stopped recording,
- asked the participant if there were any outstanding questions about the study, and
- set up the final interview meeting time to occur within 2 weeks.

When the Zoom meeting ended, a copy of the video was saved to my desktop; the video was then moved and saved to both my Box Secure Storage account (https://box.umn.edu) and my personal external hard drive. Each video was deleted from my desktop.

Preparation for Final Interview

Soon after the first interview ended, I emailed the participant to confirm the time of the final interview and provided the second set of questions for the participant to think about prior to the next meeting (see Appendix G). Again, questions were chosen based on the research design. Utilizing a queer phenomenological approach, participants were asked to reflect on how they came to understand their orientation with masculinity and potential queer moments where they have resisted or questioned hegemonic ideals of masculinity (Ahmed, 2006). Given that participants may have offered responses to these questions during the first meeting, I asked them to consider only those questions that they had not addressed or asked them questions focused on expounding their responses to particular issues that they raised during the first meeting.

Final Interview

For the final (second) meeting, I met with each participant over Zoom for 1 to 2 hr. I asked for consent to begin recording (see Table E1); all participants consented. Upon doing so, I began to record the interview via Zoom on my MacBook Pro, and I asked for consent for the participant to be interviewed (see Table E2); all participants consented. To start the interview, I provided a member check by briefly summarizing what I had heard them say at the previous interview and asked them if my summary had encapsulated their responses correctly. If they stated that anything was incorrect, I gave

the participant a chance to go into more details. Then, I asked the set of predetermined questions for the final interview (see Appendix G), along with relevant follow-up and probing questions based on the content and context of each participant's answers (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I also took notes in order to help create additional probing and follow-up questions.

At the end of the final interview, I

- stopped recording;
- explained my timeline for developing this study;
- let them know that I planned on sharing the preliminary themes and subthemes that I would develop based on their answers and that they would have the ability to comment on those through a member check survey (see Table C2); and
- asked them for their mailing address in order to provide them a $50 VISA gift card, which I wrote on an envelope and mailed on that same day.

When the Zoom meeting ended, a copy of the video was saved to my desktop; the video was then moved and saved to both my Box Secure Storage account (https://box.umn.edu) and my personal external hard drive. Each video was deleted from my desktop.

Saturation

Upon the conclusion of each interview, I transcribed what was said utilizing dictation software in both Zoom and Microsoft Word, as well as provided my own proofreading of the automatic dictation. During transcription, I reviewed participants' interviews to identify any newer or repeated themes, the latter meaning saturation was being reached. Moreover, I made efforts to attempt to get a diverse group of participants

who came from different backgrounds (e.g., race, sexuality, gender identity, year in college, institution type, geographic area, etc.).

Procedures for Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted by transcribing each interview through the use of delineated technologies (i.e., Zoom and Microsoft Word) and conducting a thematic analysis utilizing inductive content analysis using Braun and Clark's (2006) framework.

Transcription

I transcribed each interview within a week after it was completed. Transcription occurred by connecting my personal external hard drive (which had one of the copies of the interview saved on it) to my MacBook Pro, playing the video, and utilizing the dictation feature in Microsoft Word to capture what was said. At various moments, I would stop the dictation feature, repeat the video, and proofread the transcript to ensure that all wording was correct (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I also removed verbal utterances such as "um" and "like" (when not being used as a simile or as a verb) in order to make the transcript more readable for coding. A codebook that listed the codes and themes for interviews was developed utilizing NVivo qualitative data-analysis software (see Appendices H and I). Each interview was labeled with codes and was saved on my Box Secure Storage account (https://box.umn.edu) and on my personal external hard drive.

Thematic Analysis

Phenomenological data analysis asks that researchers transcribe interview responses, divide the text into units (e.g., codes), and then from those units, develop broader themes that bear significance to the phenomenon at hand (Paley, 2017). Upon

completing all transcripts, I underwent a thematic analysis of the data. Thematic analysis is defined as a "method for identifying and analyzing patterns of meaning in a dataset . . . requiring an 'engaged, intuitive' investigator who considers the 'ways in which they are *part* of the analysis' (Braun et al., 2015, p. 107)" (Neuendorf, 2019, p. 213). The goal of such analysis is to "develop a *story*" and "highlight the 'constellations' of meanings present in the texts" (Neuendorf, 2019, p. 213). Because I conducted semistructured interviews, it is considered a best practice to develop a codebook and code transcripts (see Appendices H and I). However, because probing questions and follow-up questions were asked that were not consistent among participants, it was not appropriate to compare and to contrast the interviews as if they were hard data (Morse, 2017; Neuendorf, 2019). I utilized a step-by-step approach to thematic analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), including (a) familiarizing myself with the data, (b) generating initial codes, (c) searching for themes, (d) reviewing themes, (e) defining themes, and (f) writing this report.

Familiarizing Myself With the Data

All interviews were transcribed verbatim utilizing Zoom and Microsoft Office dictation software. I read through all of the data at least two times but assigned no codes to ensure that I was familiar with the data as well as to ascertain when I had reached saturation, free from the initial pressures of generating codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Generating Initial Codes

After the second read, I came up with a list of codes and developed a codebook, defining each code up with which I came based on my interpretation of the data (see

Appendix H; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Examples of initial codes included “minimizing differences,” “did not show emotion,” “not queer enough,” “disconnected from peers,” and “role models important.” On the third read, I assigned preliminary codes from the codebook. After the third read, I revisited the codebook and made a number of changes to the codes and their definitions, consolidating the codes I had by merging similar ones and clarifying what other codes meant. As a result, I determined if codes should remain the same or if they needed to be changed based on whether I was using multiple codes that were redundant (e.g., “was too out as queer” and “concerned for being outed” merged as “concerned for being out”), or if there were codes that were irrelevant to my research question (e.g., “cars”). Satisfaction was achieved when I believed there was no redundancy among codes (see Appendix I).

Searching for Themes

From the newer codes, I grouped them together in order to create broader themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I continued to read through the codes until I was satisfied with a list of substantive themes with each main theme, including subthemes, grounded in the evidential pattern (see Appendix I; Neuendorf, 2019; Polit & Beck, 2008).

Reviewing Themes

Although I provided a member check at the start of the second interview (see Appendix G), I provided another check after I was done searching for themes as part of the theme-reviewing process (see Table C2 and Appendix D; Braun & Clarke, 2006). To do so, I sent each participant an email with a copy of their transcripts with my preliminary themes and subthemes attached, along with a member check survey asking if

the themes and subthemes that I had preliminarily assigned resonated with their experiences. Eleven people responded to the member check survey. Nine respondents stated that all of the themes and subthemes accurately reflected their interviews and experiences, and two respondents stated that most of the themes and subthemes resonated with their experiences (while also naming the themes and subthemes that did not; see Table 1). As a result, I finalized a set of themes and subthemes to draw upon in Chapter 4 and developed a detailed analysis for each one (Neuendorf, 2019).

Defining Themes

For each theme and subtheme, I created definitions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Moreover, I drew from participants' quotations that exemplified the themes and subthemes to tell a coherent story about the data and about what I had found to expand upon those definitions in order to bolster the concreteness, openness, and resonance of this study (see Chapter 4). Because this process was inductive, prior literature and conceptual frameworks were not used to create the themes and subthemes. All notes, transcripts, coding, and thematic analysis were kept as digital copies in order to provide an audit trail to enhance the quality of the study (Polit & Beck, 2008). I also provided access to all of these materials to my advisor, Dr. Andrew Furco, so that he could provide an external review through an inquiry audit (Polit & Beck, 2008).

Writing the Report

Finally, the last step in the thematic analysis process was to write this report (see Chapter 4; Braun & Clarke, 2006). I wrote up my findings to discuss each theme and their relationships to each other, utilizing a thick description that attempted to discuss

participant stories, contexts, experiences, and observations in order to bolster the concreteness, openness, resonance, and transferability of this study (Neuendorf, 2019; Polit & Beck, 2008).

Criteria for Judging Quality of Research

This research was assessed for quality utilizing Guba and Lincoln's (1985) criteria for evaluating the trustworthiness of qualitative research and de Witt and Ploeg's (2006) criteria for evaluating the rigor of phenomenological research.

Trustworthiness

The primary criterion for judging the quality of a qualitative research study is to assess its trustworthiness (Morse, 2017; Peden-McAlpine, 2020; Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). Trustworthiness can be assessed using Guba and Lincoln's (1985) four benchmarks: dependability, credibility, confirmability, and transferability.

Dependability

Dependability refers to the idea that the data are stable over time; that is, questions asked are similar and auditing of the data is possible by another party yielding similar findings (Morse, 2017; Peden-McAlpine, 2020; Polit & Beck, 2008). To enhance dependability, I

- recorded my methods, including questions and processes;
- used an interview guide with the same questions for each participant (see Appendices F and G); and
- described my methods in detail within this study so that others may replicate it (Peden-McAlpine, 2020).

Credibility

Credibility refers to how confident a researcher is in the truth of their data and their analysis (Morse, 2017; Peden-McAlpine, 2020; Polit & Beck, 2008). In qualitative studies, researchers always rely on their own lens to listen to the stories of and analyze the transcripts of participants, creating potential for bias, filtering, and misinterpretation (Morse, 2017). To enhance credibility, I

- prepared participants with questions ahead of time so that they were able to reflect on their answers prior to the interview sessions (see Appendices F and G);
- interviewed in two sessions, allowing for prolonged engagement;
- engaged in member-checking processes twice in order to confirm if the data analysis validated participants' experiences, including (a) once at the beginning of the final interview (see Appendix G) and (b) once after preliminary codes, subthemes, and themes had been generated (see Table C2 and Appendix D); and
- looked for contrary narratives in order to see if there were participants who went against the grain of what others were saying in their interviews (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Morse, 2017; Peden-McAlpine, 2020).

Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the objectivity of the data (Morse, 2017). This criterion does not mean that the researcher analyzes the data through an objective worldview but instead is accurate about recording and analyzing all narrative data as presented. To enhance confirmability, I

- recorded all interviews with the consent of the participants utilizing Zoom technology;
- typed rough notes during each interview that allowed me to keep track of what participants said and to formulate more effective and more useful probing and follow-up questions;
- transcribed all interviews verbatim with the assistance of dictation technology in Zoom and Microsoft Word;
- ensured that I found a saturation point with interviews where I noticed consistent findings across interviewees; and
- kept a codebook that defined all codes and themes that were found within the data analysis (see Appendix I; Morse, 2017; Peden-McAlpine, 2020; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Transferability

Transferability refers to how the findings of a particular study can be similar or analogous to findings from other contexts in like studies (Morse, 2017). To enhance transferability, I

- grounded my questions (see Appendices F and G) within the literature review of this study;
- grounded my questions (see Appendices F and G) within a critical race and critical masculinity theoretical framework, as issues of power and hegemonic oppressive forces play a role in the lives of sexual-minority undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals;

- compared the findings of this study to published research findings (see Chapters 4 and 5); and
- provided a rich description of participants' experiences around masculinity in college within this study's findings (see Chapter 4; Morse, 2017; Peden-McAlpine, 2020; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Evaluation of Phenomenological Rigor

de Witt and Ploeg (2006) provided evaluation criteria for determining the rigor of a phenomenological study: balanced integration, openness, concreteness, resonance, and actualization.

Balanced Integration

Balanced integration requires comprehensiveness, meaning that there is alignment with the philosophical theme, researcher, and topic of research (de Witt & Ploeg, 2006). To ensure balanced integration, I

- articulated my philosophical approach to use critical masculinity and critical race theories (see Chapter 2), their influence on my positionality, and why they relate to my research question;
- was reflexive by reflecting critically on my biases and how I approached my research in order to mitigate my own prejudices;
- provided quality checks to allow participants to be authentic, treated participants with fairness and respect, as well as allowed interviewees to process their feelings if they became triggered or traumatized during the interview process; and
- used a critical lens to analyze the data to understand participant voices.

Openness

Openness requires "an explicit systematic accounting for decisions" that "[open] up the study to scrutiny" (de Witt & Ploeg, 2006, p. 225); in other words, it requires transparency (Polit & Beck, 2008). To ensure openness, I

- delineated my specific methods and data analysis in this study and my notes; and
- used exemplar quotations in Chapter 4 in order to highlight what participants stated verbatim in the interviews, enhancing verifiability (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015).

Concreteness

Phenomenological studies provide concreteness when a researcher demonstrates applicability to the reader about the phenomenon under study with "experiences in their lifeworld" (de Witt & Ploeg, 2006, p. 225). To ensure concreteness, I

- found examples from the previous literature on how hegemonic masculinity impacts sexual-minority undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals (see Chapters 2, 4, and 5);
- illustrated exemplar quotations from participants in Chapter 4 to highlight experiences that they have gone through in higher education with respect to making meaning of their masculine identity; and
- provided opportunities for future directions for higher education in Chapter 5, as well as what student affairs practitioners and faculty members could do to support sexual-minority undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals within their work.

Resonance

Resonance refers to the experience a person has upon reading the findings from a phenomenological study, particularly when an individual is able to understand the phenomenon under study with better appreciation and complexity (de Witt & Ploeg, 2006). To do this, I have highlighted key quotations from participants that can illuminate better understandings, particularly from interviewees' use of idioms or metaphors (see Chapter 4).

Actualization

Actualization suggests that a specific phenomenological study can be used and interpreted by future generations (de Witt & Ploeg, 2006). To date, "no formal mechanism presently exists within the research community for recording actualization" (de Witt & Ploeg, 2006, p. 226).

Ethics and Human Relations

Efforts were made in this study to adhere to strict ethical standards in order to protect the participants who engaged in this research. These efforts included (a) using informed consent, (b) maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of participants, and (c) undergoing a review and approval process of this research through the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board.

Informed Consent

Prior to each participant's two interviews, I obtained informed consent through voice affirmation via recording and by providing a consent script (see Appendix E). There were several risks to participating in the study. Participants could have shared

details that were sensitive or even traumatic in nature, bringing up feelings of stress, anxiety, dread, or panic. As a result, I needed to ensure not only that participants were prepared for this but also that I was ready both to empathize with someone in the moment and to provide necessary resources to mental health services on their campuses that were still open in spite of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Participants—all of whom identified as sexual minorities and some of whom identified as transgender—were not all out to everyone in their lives; participants indicated that they were often not out to parents, siblings, friends, peers, or faculty despite being out to other individuals on or off their campuses. Steps were taken to ensure participants' privacy and the confidentiality of their responses and to notify them of this expectation throughout the study. To ensure the confidentiality and privacy of each participant, I

- held all meetings through Zoom, which both (a) were password protected and (b) had the waiting-room feature activated so that only I—as meeting host—could virtually admit people;
- sent all Zoom information (e.g., links, passwords, etc.) 1 day before the meeting to the respective emails that participants had provided me;
- stored any video recordings, interview notes, and typed transcripts on my Box Secure Storage account (https://box.umn.edu; which was password protected and dual authenticated with my smartphone; only my advisor and I had access to these

files) and my personal external hard drive in a locked safety deposit in my home (to which only I had the key); and

- used pseudonyms when naming participants (see Table 1) and took out any identifying information from typed transcripts or the data that were published (e.g., campus names, building names, department names, cities of residence, cities of origin, etc.).

Approval by Institutional Review Board

This study was submitted for review and approved by the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board on July 6, 2020 (see Appendix J). The study identification number was STUDY00010061.

Limitations of This Study

While there are a number of findings that corresponded and diverted from previous research studies, cautions should be made in interpreting and utilizing these findings for future research and practice within higher education. Based on the research design, there are a number of limitations to this study, including (a) the generalizability of the findings, (b) the limitations in sampling specific demographics (viz., GBQ Black and GBQ Indigenous students), (c) the use of member checking, (d) the lack of interrater reliability measures, and (e) the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nongeneralizability of Findings

Because of the use of nonprobability sampling techniques, these findings are not generalizable to a particular or broader portion of the GBQ undergraduate population. This study utilized purposive sampling, where recruitment emails were sent to specific

staff, faculty, and student organizations in higher education who were deemed by me (as a result of knowing them or as a result of their job or group title) to work closely with potential eligible participants on their respective campuses. Additionally, this study's criteria for participant eligibility limited students based on sexual orientation, gender identity, geographic region, educational status, age, and language spoken.

Although I had rationales for why I decided to create these criteria, they also prevented me from interviewing individuals with other sexual and gender identities, those from outside of Minnesota, those with different functions within higher education, youth and older adults, graduate students, and those who may have been in college but are no longer registered; in other words, I missed hearing from many other individuals' experiences. Therefore, the data obtained from these interviews should not be used make broad assumptions about GBQ men and transmasculine individuals within postsecondary institutions. Nevertheless, there is comparability between the findings of this study and the findings of existing published studies within like contexts, also known as transferability (Morse, 2017; Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). Transferability was shown in this chapter by demonstrating (a) where themes and subthemes that emerged from this study align or were congruent with findings found in previous literature (see also Table 3) and (b) where themes and subthemes that were found were not congruent with previous research.

Sampling Limitations in Reaching Demographic Groups

Some of my sampling techniques may have resulted in this study yielding the participant pool it did. For example, many LGBTQIA+ offices and student organizations

cater primarily to White sexual-minority students, which may have made it difficult for me to access students of color who may have wanted to participate in this study (Duran, 2019; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013). Moreover, I am aware that 10 of the participants were recruited based on connections that I had with specific student affairs professionals across the state; although others were recruited outside of my direct networks, I may have missed opportunities to recruit additional participants outside those networks.

I attempted to mitigate these challenges by also including multicultural centers and racial and ethnic studies departments, as these spaces are often where sexual minorities of color congregate on campuses (Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013). I also emailed a number of staff, faculty, and student organizations to which I had no prior affiliation. Although these safeguards were instituted, a majority of participants were from public institutions (13 out of 19), cisgender men (12), from rural institutions (12), or White (11); a plurality were gay (nine) or sophomores (nine). While not necessarily demographically homogenous in any specific category, certain populations of students were overrepresented in the study, and others had less representation or were not included (viz., GBQ Black and GBQ Indigenous students). Although I aimed to seek to secure a sample that included a diverse set of participants, I did face some challenges in achieving this goal.

Use of Member Checking

Despite the use of member checking to enhance the credibility of a qualitative research study, participants can often defer to the judgment of the researcher rather than

trust their own instincts, even when they believe the researcher's interpretation of their experiences is incorrect (Morse, 2017). Encouraging participants to challenge my thinking and norming that experience was essential for this process to be successful. I attempted to frame the member-checking conversation in both the first interview and the online survey with participants by emphasizing that only they were the experts of their own experiences and lives and that their honesty in my initial coding was necessary to achieve trustworthy data. Most participants who completed the member check survey concurred with the themes and subthemes that I generated from their interviews and had no additional feedback. Moreover, two of the 11 individuals agreed with most but not all of the themes and subthemes. Therefore, although the member check provided credibility to the findings of this study, the inherent limitations regarding initiating this type of data validation should be considered.

Lack of Interrater Reliability Measures

This study did not have any interrater reliability measures established. Instead, I relied on myself to create and to assign codes to all transcripts, as well as grouping them together to ascertain themes and subthemes (see Table 2 and Appendix D). As a result, I did not have any official triangulation strategies set in place outside of member checking (Polit & Beck, 2008). I attempted to mitigate this by comparing my data to previous research studies—which I have done in both Chapter 4 and this chapter—and by providing access of my data to my faculty advisor so that he was able to engage in an inquiry audit. The comparison of data in this publication provides readers the ability to make judgments about these data; additionally, providing my advisor access to all

interview video files, notes, and transcript materials increased the dependability of the findings.

COVID-19 Pandemic

This study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, many students were stressed with issues around technology access, isolation, mental health, and unemployment (Rodríguez-Hidalgo, 2020). Additionally, the University of Minnesota—along with many other research institutions—restricted all interviews to virtual ones (e.g., Zoom) and prohibited in-person meetings (University of Minnesota Office of the Vice President for Research, 2021). Nevertheless, despite these challenges, I was able to find participants. Interviews began 5 months after the pandemic begun, and by that time, participants had indicated that they had grown used to Zoom technology. And the ease of using this technology allowed me to connect with and to interview students from across the state much more easily than I would have if I had done solely in-person interviews.

Chapter 4:

Findings

Over the course of 3 months, I conducted 38 interviews with 19 undergraduate students who identified as sexual-minority men or transmasculine individuals across Minnesota, all of whom ranged in demographic characteristics and were given pseudonyms for the purposes of confidentiality (see Table 1). Upon conducting a critical thematic analysis of the data and engaging in a member check with participants—11 of whom responded (see Table 1)—four themes and 13 subthemes emerged from the data. Utilizing a queer phenomenological research design, themes were generated and described in this chapter through understanding participants' orientations toward hegemonic masculinity; determining how significantly participants were oriented in the direction of dominant White masculine standards; and if, when, and why participants became "disoriented" from those norms through experiencing queer moments (Ahmed, 2006). These moments of orientation toward and away from White masculine standards—as well as understanding how and why meaning was made in those directions around participants' collegiate experiences—is the primary way I have shaped the rich description of my data's themes and subthemes in this chapter. Table 2 summarizes these themes and subthemes, as well as how participants described their orientations toward them.

Table 2

Themes, Subthemes, and How Orientations Manifested Within Participants' Narratives

Label	Subtheme	How participants' orientations manifested
	Theme 1: Foundations of masculinity entering college	
1A	Avoiding being seen as feminine	Engaging in masculine activities and demeanors, avoiding feminine/"wrong" activities, dealing with internalized transphobia
1B	Maintaining control over one's surroundings and other people	Feeling out of control, realizing and utilizing male privilege, striving to be brave
1C	Sustaining family relationships and traditions	Taking care of family, carrying on family traditions and legacies
	Theme 2: Performance of hegemonic masculinity on campus	
2A	Comparing and competing against other men	Seeing a "hierarchy" of men on campus, comparing oneself against straight cisgender men and/or GBQ [a] individuals
2B [b]	Taking in feedback about one's masculinity from others	Being policed by others around one's masculine expressions and behaviors, being policed by others regarding to whom they were allowed to be attracted (i.e., straight cisgender men)
2C	Seeking validation from others	Being "seen as masculine" by peers, wanting to be seen as a whole person (viz., not tokenized)
2D	Struggling with masculinity in connection with other identities	Struggling engaging in hegemonic masculine behaviors in relationship to other identities; wrestling with internalized biphobia, homophobia, and/or transphobia

Label	Subtheme	How participants' orientations manifested
	Theme 3: Navigating hegemonic masculinity on campus	
3A	Finding support through institutional policies and practices	Hearing pronouns asked at campus functions, living in intentional housing communities, seeing oneself reflected in the curriculum and/or by faculty, participating in affirming cocurricular programming (e.g., student organizations, leadership opportunities, etc.)
3B	Finding supportive community within one's multiple identities	Seeing one's multiple identities visible on Campus
3C	Maintaining safety through gender expression	Presenting as hypermasculine in times of distress, avoiding straight cisgender men
	Theme 4: Agency and desire to resist hegemonic masculinity on campus	
4A	Unlearning hegemonic masculinity	Recognizing privileges around one's social identities, questioning one's gender identity, connecting the relationships between one's dominant and one's marginalized identities
4B	Redefining masculinity	Rejecting misogynistic attitudes and behaviors, seeing masculinity as a fluid concept
4C	Discovering one's agency to change surroundings	Changing and modifying oppressive behaviors (in oneself and/or in others), engaging in activism on campus

Note. The themes and subthemes listed above are the final ones found from this study's data.

[a] GBQ = gay, bisexual, and queer. [b] Subtheme 2B was renamed after the member check survey to avoid overlap and confusion with Subtheme 2C.

First, participants learned specific tenets about what masculinity was before starting their tenure at their postsecondary institutions. The tenets identified were

- avoiding been seen as feminine,
- maintaining control over their surroundings and other people, and
- sustaining family relationships and traditions.

Second, many participants often conformed to hegemonic standards of masculinity during their collegiate experience in order to fit in with others, while also struggling with whether conforming to those standards was congruent with their own multiple identities. These hegemonic standards were

- comparing and competing against other men on their campuses, both consciously and unconsciously, around things such as strength and appearance;
- taking in feedback from fellow peers about whether their performance of masculinity adhered to hegemonic standards, primarily though others' or their own policing of their behaviors and attractions;
- seeking validation from other men around how they performed their masculinity, although such validation may not have occurred or may have shown up through tokenism; and
- struggling in their masculine identity in connection with other identities, including their sexual orientation, gender identity, sex assigned at birth, race, or religion.

Third, participants discussed how they navigated systems of hegemonic masculinity on their campuses, including through

- finding support through institutional policies and practices such as sharing personal pronouns, having gender-inclusive facilities, and attending intentional programming;
- finding supportive communities within one's multiple identities, including fostering connections with students who shared similar identities and through involvement with student organizations; and
- maintaining safety through utilizing gender expression, specifically by expressing as hypermasculine to keep free from harm or violence from others.

Finally, participants shared how they had developed agency and a desire to resist hegemonic masculine norms on their campuses. This development was done by

- unlearning hegemonic masculine norms,
- redefining what masculinity meant to them as participants, and
- discovering their agency to change their surroundings on their campuses to make a better experience for those with marginalized identities.

This section explores these themes and subthemes more deeply, providing a rich description of the participants' experiences and using quotations as exemplars to narrate a cohesive understanding of the findings to provide concreteness (de Witt & Ploeg, 2006). Moreover, it is noted which themes and subthemes correspond with previous literature—including literature that is specifically focused on the identity development of GBQ undergraduate masculinity—and which ones are not congruent with prior studies in order to demonstrate transferability (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Pseudonyms are used to identify participants in order to maintain confidentiality.

Foundations of Masculinity Entering College

Participants shared extensive narratives within their interviews around how they oriented themselves toward masculinity growing up from their childhood into late adolescence. More often than not, their orientations regarding masculinity were shaped primarily from their fathers or some sort of father figure in their lives (e.g., grandfather, mother's boyfriend) and secondarily from male peers in their lives (e.g., school friends) and media sources (e.g., television, movies, etc.). Although participants' perspectives on what they had learned about masculinity were diverse, there were some common themes most people held as they matriculated, two of which were named by O'Neil et al. (1986) as primary constructions of hegemonic masculinity: homophobia (i.e., through femmephobia) and socialized power and control. Avoiding the perception of having a feminine gender performance as well as attempting to assert control over one's surroundings and those in one's lives were two of the three major ways participants were oriented toward masculinity as they entered college. Moreover, many participants also felt a connection between masculinity and adhering to family norms and traditions, as being "a man" meant that they were expected to keep their family name intact and to continue customs that were practiced by their family or their greater community, similar to what Chan (2017) found among GBQ Filipino collegiate male participants.

Avoiding Being Seen as Feminine

> The first 17 years of my life, I felt like I was putting up this facade of trying to act more manly and speak a different tone, walk in a certain way, that would be perceived as something that a straight man would do. When in reality, I'd want to

> walk down the hall and maybe do a little spin or twirl or something like that. Or speak the tone of voice that's just natural, not purposely make my voice lower. And before I came out to my family . . . I was constantly worried, oh, am I seeming gay, or am I seeming really feminine right now? Do I need to dial it back and seem more masculine and straight? (Rhett)

Participants' orientations toward masculinity prior to entering college mirrored what previous research has found; that is, masculinity is often understood best in terms of what it is not: femininity (Kimmel, 2008; O'Neil et al., 1986; Vandello et al., 2008). Participants grew up learning that being masculine meant avoiding (or avoiding being perceived to have) feminine attributes. This avoidance often meant that participants had to repress feminine characteristics, express feminine characteristics in specific environments where they felt safe doing so, or overemphasize masculine characteristics to be taken seriously. This performance of avoiding femininity was often done both to receive validation in their masculinity and to prevent from being seen as GBQ by others.

Activities and Demeanor

Carter, a multiracial gay cisgender man, and Diego, a Latino gay cisgender man, described their childhood memories with play and remembered having to choose when and where to enjoy their favorite activities. When going to McDonald's with his grandmother, Carter would often jump at the chance to play with the "girls' toys" (e.g., Barbies), only to hide them when he got home or to risk having them confiscated by his parents. He discussed his joy with playing with certain dolls, but he knew that he would have to "accept the fact that [he would] have to hand [his toys] over" to his parents each

time. However, despite consistent discouragement from his family, he continued to seek out playing with his favorite toys, especially with the tacit support of his grandmother and sister. Similarly, Diego would often play with such toys with his sister, but would have to "[hide] any evidence" of their activities when their parents entered the room. Often, both his immediate and his extended family would encourage him to play soccer with his male cousins despite Diego considering himself "really bad" at the sport and not wanting to play. Consequently, because of parental policing of childhood activities, both Carter and Diego felt that they were restricted in how they could play and perform their gender from an early age.

Several participants also expressed childhood anxieties around the perception of being "like" a girl, whether it was through behaviors, attitudes, or the individuals with which a person surrounded themselves. Benjamin, a White bisexual cisgender man, recalled that the most poignant moments growing up where his masculinity was called into question revolved around when he was upset: "I remember someone calling me a crybaby and a girl, because I got upset when I was little. . . . I just remember I got upset and I cried, and they called me a girl." However, Benjamin described not being too perturbed in these moments, only to agree that he believed others were potentially invalidating his male identity. Rhett, a White gay cisgender man, described having to police his behavior well into his adolescence. Rhett often changed the tone and cadence of his voice (i.e., to be "a deeper tone"), "not getting excited" over certain things that could be deemed by others as "more stereotypical feminine things" (e.g., clothing, interior decorating), and monitoring his body movements (e.g., his dancing style, how he

walked). Rhett wanted to ensure others perceived him as a "straight man" out of fear that his family and others might have seen him as queer and therefore reject him, particularly based on the "overall [not nice] tone" his dad and other family members had had when talking about gay-related issues at past family events. He heavily self-monitored his gender performance until his senior year in high school, when he did decide to come out as gay to his parents. Thus, several participants described their commitment to staying within the *lines*—or predetermined norms set by society—of White masculinity by following an antifemininity script (Ahmed, 2006).

Avoiding "Doing Something Wrong"

Austin, a White gay cisgender man, discussed his struggles with his masculinity being invalidated by others as a child, particularly in comparison to his twin brother, who identified as straight. His brother had a significant number of male friends growing up, while Austin primarily hung out and befriended girls. His friendship with girls impacted how he viewed his own masculine identity:

> I often thought about [having friends primarily who were women] and thought that it was negative, and I needed to make more friends that were guys and make more friends that were male, just because I felt like I wasn't being the right kind of man by having women as friends.

Because of with whom he associated himself, although not called "gay," other peers often bullied him and called him a "girl" throughout elementary school. This name-calling was upsetting to him and caused him to wonder whether he needed to have more male friends; that is, he often asked himself, "am I doing something wrong?" It is worth noting that in

the member check survey, Austin did not resonate with this subtheme: “I do not feel that avoiding being seen as feminine . . . [describes] my own experiences completely.” However, this dissonance may relate more to his experience in college based on the narratives he shared in his two interviews, as he talked about feeling “confident” and “flamboyant” in his current gender identity and expression. Adam, a White queer cisgender man, also described a similar feeling of wrongness growing up when he acted in a way others perceived as feminine: “If I’m feeling less masculine, it’s like I’m bad at being who I am.” Adam noted that the only time he felt this way growing up was when someone ascribed feminine qualities to him and questioned his manhood.

Internalized Transphobia and Femmephobia

For transgender men and transmasculine participants, however, there was not as much concern expressed around being seen as queer. Instead, there was a desire—similar to cisgender participants—around being validated in their masculine identities, but this concern was rooted more around their gender expressions than their sexual orientations, modeling what Catalano (2015) found within its findings. When Jay, a White gay transmasculine nonbinary individual, initially came out in high school as nonbinary, Jay’s transgender identity was often maligned. They were seen as “someone trying to play dress up or someone pretending to be a man.” Moreover, those around him (e.g., students, peers, teachers, etc.) saw gender as binary, and so attempting to express in feminine ways as a nonbinary person were both (a) not understood by others and (b) used to further invalidate Jay’s transmasculinity. Thus, Jay ended up shifting their identity to “female-to-male” and hiding more feminine characteristics of their personality in order for their

masculine identity to be better affirmed by their surroundings, despite that identity not necessarily fully encapsulating how they saw themself.

Samuel, a multiracial queer transgender man, also felt pressure to conform to hegemonic masculine standards and to avoid being seen as feminine when he came out as transgender. As someone who "was raised in a really strict religious household," his view of masculinity was "stereotypical" and something to which he was significantly oriented to conform. Moreover, Samuel often received reactions from peers similar to those Jay received in that he was not "really" transgender or a man if he did not "look like a man." Samuel's reaction was to go "back into the closet" and attempt to "present in a way that people would believe" he was a man, such as cutting his hair. Taylor, a White bisexual transmasculine genderqueer[11] person, was oriented to their masculinity much more than their femininity, describing their relationship to femininity as "more insecure" and less processed. Although identifying as genderqueer, they described as enjoying more masculine activities growing up—particularly with their father—including sports, grilling, and listening to music. Therefore, a number of participants had similar experiences prior to college in that there was an orientation to avoid feminine behaviors in order to be seen and validated as masculine. However, differences were most significant between those who were cisgender and those who were transgender, with cisgender participants fearing themselves being outed as nonheterosexual, whereas transgender participants described wanting to avoid dysphoria or invalidation around

[11] *Genderqueer* is another term used by some who identify as having a nonbinary gender identity (Richards et al., 2016).

being perceived as feminine when they either wanted also to be seen as masculine (potentially also in addition to other gender expressions) or preferred to be seen as masculine.

Maintaining Control Over One's Surroundings and Other People

> I remember when I got my guts to drive for the first time—that was one that really sticks out to me—because my mom had me drive when I was 12. . . . We have a little motor scooter—just a little one—probably like 115 cc, because we lived in the jungle in [country]. But yeah, so I remember that was something special, that I think it was something about the car, or something about the engine, something about driving, being in control of how it moves and where it goes and how fast it is. I think it was something like that made me a little bit more of a man that day. (Adam)

Many of the participants described their childhood and adolescent socialization into masculinity as being oriented toward control, particularly over their surroundings (e.g., events, vehicles) and others in their lives (e.g., the relationships that they maintained with those around them). The need for power and control in one's life is congruent with O'Neil et al.'s (1986) conceptualization of hegemonic masculinity in the United States and aligns with existing research—primarily focusing on heterosexual cisgender men—that demonstrates a desire for power over or power for those around them (Connell, 1987; Kimmel, 2008).

Absence of Control

One way several participants oriented their sense of masculinity and control was

through the absence of it. Ibrahim, a Middle Eastern–North African queer cisgender man, immigrated to the United States as a refugee from overseas. He talked about lacking power in his home country, particularly with foreign soldiers near his hometown: "One time, I gave a soldier a stare because he was harassing my mom and sister—as in us—and he literally said, 'I'll slap the shit out of you.'" He talked about the foreign soldiers as "just the supreme," and described himself as "jealous" of both them and their families. He saw those individuals as being afforded an opportunity to derive agency in their own lives that he and his family were not given. As a result, he named in our interview that he saw "two different worlds in the same area," represented by him and his family on one end and the soldiers and their families on the other. In other words, Ibrahim lacked control and power over his own destiny in those moments.

Carter and Samuel also described having a lack of control, but specifically in regard to their identities and the lack of support that they had from their families. Upon coming out in middle school, Samuel discussed that his parents siphoned off access to his friends outside of school hours and that this continued until he started college. The more Samuel attempted to express his masculinity, the less control he had over his life, as he became further isolated from those not in his family. Samuel mentioned that he usually did not "like to dwell on [his] childhood," calling it "fleeting," "dreamlike," and "surreal." Despite the years of emotional abuse that he had to endure as a result of the oppression he faced due to his gender expression and queerness, he discussed resisting this abuse and attempted to learn more about transgender communities at his local library, where he was allowed to be present under the guise of studying. Similarly, after revealing

to his family that he was going to a high school dance with another boy, Carter's parents sent him to a facility where he endured 9 days of "gay-conversion therapy." Carter remembers seminars that focused on masculinity and "what it meant" to be a man (viz., being heterosexual)—particularly through a religious lens—as well as having to "rate women on a scale from 1 to 10" to determine their sexual attractiveness. Upon completing the program, Carter described being "really tired" when his parents came to get him. However, despite feeling out of control, Carter had an urge to resist what he was taught in conversion therapy: "It was getting out of the hospital . . . I just remembered sitting in the car and was like, the fight is just beginning. It's not over for me." As a result, despite having their parents attempt to "draw lines" that oriented their identities toward hegemonic masculinity and cisheteronormativity, Samuel and Carter still yearned for a sense of their own agency over their lives and experiences and to deviate from the prescribed "grid" for masculinity that was set by society (Ahmed, 2006).

Male Privilege

Mitchell, a multiracial gay transgender man, conceptualized control as male privilege and recognized a shift in how others treated him and how he was able to navigate through the world. As someone who was assigned female sex at birth, his previous orientation around navigating gender was not receiving benefits in comparison to others. Upon coming out as a transgender man, instead of being punished for expressing as masculine, Mitchell noticed shifts in his favor among peers and teachers. Attending an all-girls high school, as he began "to pass more," he noticed a "power dynamic" that shifted how he was perceived and how others engaged with him in the

classroom and with “interactions in passing.” His orientation around the understanding of his gender shifted, causing a number of mixed emotions. His high school was committed to having “conversations about sexism and misogyny” in order to “[lift] up women against the male power structure.” Simultaneously, he noticed his peers and those in authority within the school shift their demeanors toward him in ways where he noticed that he was given more respect and more space than his female counterparts. According to Mitchell, male privilege afforded him the ability to control parts of his life that he had not been able to control.

Bravery

Many of the participants described control through a paradigm of bravery and courage; that is, having the ability or tenacity to accomplish things that others may not have the will or ability to do. Benjamin associated bravery and masculinity with hero stories, “a strong male lead who’s willing to risk life and limb” or “willing to go into enemy lines.” Garrett, a White gay cisgender man, also described his orientation toward bravery as similar, describing it as when “a man would just go up” and “make a decision or do something” others would be “scared” to make; in other words, Garrett described bravery as being fearless to accomplish tasks. Liam, a White transgender man who identifies as both demisexual and gay, oriented bravery as not only being fearless but also projecting strength and “fights.” He recalled a story of being picked on at a public pool by a stranger, going home and telling his mother’s boyfriend, and having that boyfriend go back to confront and to threaten the stranger with a fight. However, Liam did not find that behavior admirable, and recognized that form of supposed bravery as “toxic.”

Finally, Natanael, a multiracial queer cisgender man, saw adhering to hegemonic standards of masculinity—"[being] strong, wanting to be muscular"—as associated with bravery. Therefore, although participants had different orientations to power and control and what it meant for them (e.g., lack of agency, bravery, privilege, etc.), there was an association between exerting one's masculinity and shaping one's own life narrative and masculine identity formation during adolescence.

Sustaining Family Relationships and Traditions

> You will just be disowned [for being out as gay]. My father would be disowned. . . . A lot of people would stop talking to him, unless he disowns me publicly. And I know that would really hurt him to do so. So, that's why. My mom told me, "you cannot tell anybody back home that you're gay, because they will destroy us." As in, not just kill us, but by talking mean, all that rumors and all that. . . . Honor back home is important. (Ibrahim)

The final subtheme that participants highlighted in their socialization of White masculinity prior to matriculation was that of sustaining family relationships and traditions. Participants oriented themselves around this subtheme in several directions, including the ways masculinity was tied to a sense of responsibility and obligation around taking care of one's family, as well as carrying on family traditions and norms. This subtheme was not explicitly present in the previous literature focusing on GBQ undergraduate students' meaning making of their masculinity, except in Chan's (2017) research with GBQ Filipino undergraduate men, where participants named familial traditions as formative in their masculine identity development.

Taking Care of Family

Growing up, Diego's masculine identity was oriented toward a sense of obligation for taking care of his siblings. As a first-generation Mexican American, Diego described his family as "very patriarchal," where "there always has to be a man of the house" with protective duties. After his parents divorced when he was around 10 years of age, these responsibilities "fell onto [him] because [he] was the oldest" boy in the house. Diego was required to take care of his younger siblings because of the expectations placed upon him based on his assigned gender at birth, as well as the cultural norms his family espoused through his ethnic background, as he needed to "set an example." But even though Diego's orientation of masculinity was set in this direction, it still did not make sense to him: "Why would a 10- or 11-year-old little boy have any control or be the one to make any rules for his younger siblings?" Although he assumed these duties, he questioned his role and why his masculinity, sibling birth order, and culture mandated such action from him.

Adam had similar responsibilities as a child, but set for different reasons: Due to his father's work, he and his immediate family lived abroad during his adolescence and would often not see his dad for months at a time. Adam discussed "[being] at home with [his] mom" and needing to help with chores and tasks "she wasn't necessary strong enough for . . . like [lifting] the water jugs" to and from the water dispenser in their home in the jungle. He discussed recognizing that such roles were not gendered in and of themselves, but did describe his masculine identity as being tied to a sense of family obligation, where he saw himself "[taking] care of things, [earning] the money, and

[doing] things, fixing things around the house" for any future family he would have. Thus, for both Diego and Adam, a deep sense of obligation around one's masculine identity overcame moments of disorientation, including questions, resistance, or unlearning of traditional gender roles as a child.

Family Traditions and Legacies

The association between masculinity and family responsibilities was also oriented with family traditions and legacies among participants. These customs included interests and passions, including with Aiden, Peter, and Natanael. Aiden, a Latino queer transmasculine nonbinary individual, had close family who had invested their business in cars: "My great grandfather raced rally cards and owned the family mechanic shop. . . . And then my grandfather took over. . . . And then my father and his brother." Cars were a uniting force in Aiden's family, but one that was overwhelmingly shared by the men. As a person assigned female sex at birth, despite knowing and valuing cars like their male elders, they were not seen by their father and others as expressing the same interest or having the same insider knowledge: "I think it was at the time just the thing of like, this is my daughter, so she doesn't know about the cars." Aiden has recently talked to their dad about this, attempting to explain that they do, in fact, know what their father was talking about when it came to the family business.

Peter, a White gay man who indicated having some Asian ancestry, also had a legacy in his family: football. His grandfather, father, uncle, and brother were all football stars in their hometown, as so Peter entering football "was just passing the torch." Although Peter did play football—along with several other sports—he did not find the

joy or satisfaction his other family members did: “I’d rather play Pokémon with my friend; I’d rather go outside and get a chemistry kit.” Though he was not discouraged from his father to do these things, he also “never really encouraged” them. Peter’s familial orientation was maintaining masculine traditions such as participating on the football team; nevertheless, that was not something in which he was interested.

Natanael’s father was also interested in passing sports as a family tradition, but instead of participation, he encouraged knowledge acquisition, particularly of baseball, as it was “really important culturally” for his family. As a mixed-race person who identified as part-Black, Natanael was encouraged by his dad to “learn the history of Negro League baseball . . . independent of Jackie Robinson.” Consequently, Black baseball history was important for Natanael’s dad to pass onto his son, particularly around “the importance to him about being a Black man and knowing the history” of segregation and integration in the sport. Natanael embraced that knowledge, which allowed him to witness and to recognize the “power relationships” existent within Major League Baseball today among players, managers, and owners.

Participants also expressed an orientation toward family traditions when discussing their role as the male heir in the family. Mitchell described how, on his grandfather’s side, the cultural tradition has been to provide an ethnic name. When he came out to his grandfather as a transgender man, Mitchell was given such a name, providing recognition and validity from his family around his masculine identity. Ibrahim, however, has not necessarily been given that same acceptance around his sexuality. He described his father as someone who “[wants] the best” for him as his son,

but believes that "being gay is not the best thing that can happen for [his] son." Moreover, Ibrahim described "family honor" as paramount: "If I come out to my family back home . . . it's going to be the talk of the village. . . . [My dad] would not like that, because a lot of people would ostracize [my family] . . . and gossip. So, family honor." Ibrahim has been actively encouraged by his parents not to be out to family and those in his home country so that their family could be accepted by the broader community and so that Ibrahim could be validated as their son.

Finally, Carter oriented family traditions through the lens of his parents. His father was from Japan, and his mother was from the United States, identifying as a conservative Catholic. Carter described his father, who had grown up in Japan in the 1960s, as having come of age surrounded by "toxic masculinity," where the man of the household was seen in a dominant role. Moreover, his mother's religious ideology blended with his father's masculinity to produce an orientation in his household that men could not be gay. When Carter came out to his family in high school, they were quick to respond, immediately sending him to a gay-conversion therapy center in order to learn "how a man should interact with society." In these cases, participants learned orientations toward masculinity that aligned with familial expectations on what it meant to be a "man" as well as passing down familial names, traditions, and norms that were deemed to be culturally important.

Performance of Hegemonic Masculinity on Campus

Participants all described instances where they felt the need to conform to hegemonic standards of masculinity on their college campuses. Sometimes, this

performance of masculinity felt natural and needed by participants in order to be validated and to feel a sense of belonging among other men (viz., cisgender men) on their campuses. At other times, these performances felt incongruent, problematic, and unnatural to their own identities and sense of values. First, participants were oriented toward comparing themselves with other men—specifically White cisgender men—on their campuses, engaging in conscious and unconscious competition with these men around things such as strength, appearance, and number of sexual partners. This competition mirrored similar findings by Fleming and Davis (2018) and Foste and Davis (2018), who found that heterosexual cisgender men in college often compare themselves with their fellow male peers, often through sex, strength, or level of fitting in with others. Second, many participants consistently took feedback from others about whether how they were expressing as masculine conformed within the acceptable boundaries of White masculinity, and were often policed by others (e.g., students, staff, faculty) to act and to behave in certain ways, as well as dictated by others to whom they could be attracted. This type of social control resembles previous research that had demonstrated gay men feeling that they were policed in their masculinity by straight men (Anderson, 2002; Edwards & Jones, 2009; Reigeluth & Addis, 2016), as well as transgender men feeling policed in their masculinity by cisgender men (Catalano, 2015).

Third, there was an orientation stated by participants where they yearned for validation from others—specifically in how they were expressing their masculinity—in order to make friends and even pass as masculine. Anderson (2002) and Catalano (2015) discussed how GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals felt a desire to be

validated in their masculinity by fellow peers, more often than not by their straight cisgender male counterparts. This validation, nevertheless, was often tainted when they were tokenized for their identity around their sexuality, gender, or race. Finally, participants also discussed their struggles with their masculinity in relationship to other identities. These difficulties were expressed through internalized oppression (e.g., biphobia, homophobia, and transphobia), as well as having difficulties being seen as having multiple marginalized identities (e.g., being seen as a racial minority, gender minority, and/or sexual minority). Both Greathouse et al. (2018) and Murchinson et al. (2017) demonstrated that GBQ undergraduate students struggle with internalized oppression in their sexual and gender identities. Additionally, Chan (2017) and Jourian and McCloud (2020) explored internalized homophobia with GBQ students of color and how racism impacted participants' views of their sexuality and gender.

Comparing and Competing Against Other Men

> Well, for me at the very least, I think it's weird—from my perspective anyways—trying to navigate relationships with other gay men. Especially if I want it to be more significant rather than platonic. How does my masculinity measure up to them and whatnot? And just recognizing that it's not entirely a good thing just trying to compare my masculinity to someone else's and trying to say, oh, . . . that makes them dateable if they're more masculine than me or less dateable if they're not as and such. (Diego)

Several participants described there being a "hierarchy" among men on their campuses where they were able to place themselves. Moreover, participants' orientation toward

other men on their campuses was similar to what Fleming and Davis (2018) found around the tendency for GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals to compete with their male peers around masculine performance. Participants voiced clear comparisons that they had made about themselves with other men on their campuses, particularly around sexual attractiveness and strength, revealing a propensity to compare, to contrast, and even to compete around their own masculinity versus others'.

Hierarchy on Campus

Many participants described a "social hierarchy" of men on their campuses that was visible but not necessarily named by students. Adam described himself as not particularly someone who stood out; he usually oriented himself as just "one of the other men." However, coming to campus and beginning to come out as queer to some of his friends, he began to notice a "hierarchy of masculinity and manliness" that provided "power" to those who were higher on the ladder. Adam consistently saw and compared himself to other men, asking "where do I fit around this person?" Adam talked about this hierarchy as one with no "fixed rules," as someone he deemed higher on the social ladder than him may view themselves as lower, and vice versa. Benjamin went a step further and described that he saw a scale of masculinity on his campus from "5 to 10." He "wouldn't say anyone's less masculine" or that anyone was "lower than [him]"; however, he and others could tell who were "higher" on that scale. Benjamin was not able to name specific attributes that place someone on that scale other than "[having] more masculine traits."

Jay also saw this hierarchy at play on his campus, but went even further by specifying an order. At the top were "cis people, both men and women," with men slightly higher than women, followed by "LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) people," with "trans folks" at the bottom. Those at the top "[leaned] more toward the normative" and were consequently "treated with more respect" by fellow students, staff, and faculty. This social positioning led Jay—who positions themself at the bottom of their campus' hierarchy—to view themself "almost a complete outsider" at their institution. They did not possess "a gendered or genderless space to claim as [their] own" other than their apartment and a few gender-neutral restrooms on their campus. Otherwise, most of the campus' facilities had been designed to conform to the gender binary. Their neighbors had "Trump flags" in their living space that they were able to see, making it "uneasy" for them to travel to and from their apartment, as it sent a message about how their peers felt about the dignity of transgender people.

Natanael was also able to name an order to his campus' so-called hierarchy; as a mixed-race queer man of color, he saw this power dynamic playing out in communities of color on his campus. Cisgender men of color were at the top, followed by cisgender women of color, followed by queer and transgender people of color (QTPOC) at the bottom. In describing this hierarchy, Natanael described a meeting that he went to specifically for men of color on his campus: "There were three queer people in that space, and . . . everyone else was straight." He knew those demographics because the group facilitators "made" participants say their sexual orientations during group introductions, immediately making him and other QTPOC students in the space alert and

uncomfortable. Moreover, he described the tensions among that group, the student organization for women of color, and the QTPOC student organization on his campus, as the group for men of color received the most "accolades" from his campus' administrators over the past academic year despite being the newest organization out of the three. Therefore, these hierarchies were not just being reinforced by male students, but also by students of other genders, as well as faculty and staff on his campus. Little discussion is found in the literature about the broader influence of how higher educational systems reinforce such masculinity hierarchies among GBQ undergraduate students.

Comparisons With Specific Groups

Participants remarked making comparisons between themselves and other men in ways other than a named hierarchy. These comparisons were often made between themselves and straight cisgender men, as well as between themselves and other GBQ individuals. This type of orientation was often framed around needing to understand how their expressions and performances of masculinity were being perceived in relation to other men.

Straight Cisgender Men. Several participants described comparing their masculinity to that of straight cisgender men on their campuses. Aiden, for example, remarked about their height, as they described themself as "quite short." As a transmasculine nonbinary person, they remarked that their height was much shorter than their cisgender male peers and that they were "aware" of this when they were "in a group of men," making the height comparisons with others "entangled with [their] gender." This caused them stress and made them wonder whether others were perceiving them for

the gender in which they identified. Mitchell also has taken notice of himself when he has been in a space with more cisgender men, even when they have been friends of his. Instead of acting how he usually did in front of queer cisgender male friends, he noticed himself changing his demeanor, particularly in ways that he was "talking" or "sitting." In other words, as a queer transgender man, he found himself sometimes subconsciously wanting to carry himself as a straight cisgender man when in the company of others. Taylor discussed feeling that they were a part of "the minority men"; as a transmasculine nonbinary person, they have "had to teach [themself] that [their] masculinity [was] valid and should be appreciated and put on display." When comparing themself, they saw cisgender men as being "on a different plane of masculinity" with which they had a difficult time competing. Instead, Taylor stated that they have spent their time hanging out with the transgender men on their gender-neutral residential floor, where they have found a significant amount of validation from others and opportunities to learn different ways that people can express masculinity.

Garrett also named orienting his behaviors to other straight cisgender men on his campus. As a gay cisgender man, however, this orientation was less about being seen as cisgender but more about being taken seriously by other people, especially during student-organization events and higher-level meetings for university committees of which he was a part. He described the straight men on his campus as "just [wanting] to be professional." *Professionalism*, in his experience, meant needing to comport himself in similar ways to his straight counterparts, such as having a deeper voice, dressing in a suit, and avoiding colloquialisms that were common within the gay circles in which he was

involved (e.g., saying “yas queen”). Ibrahim, however, did feel a sense of comradery with his straight male peers, particularly his fraternity brothers, with whom he described his relationship as “very, very close.” However, as a queer member in the fraternity, he reiterated needing to “go the extra five miles.” For example, in running for a position on his local-fraternity chapter’s board, Ibrahim discussed intentionally performing as “overly masculine” and as “overly competitive” in order to be taken seriously by other brothers and to be elevated to a position where he could win (which he did). Moreover, although he has enjoyed and has relished his time in the fraternity, he did not see his experience as being congruent with his straight brothers. Instead, he called himself a “100% gay frat boy,” as he described Greek life as made for “[heterosexual, cisgender] people,” or a venue for “guys to meet other girls.” Despite the changes they felt that they needed to make in their masculinity performances, both Garrett and Ibrahim described enjoying their time in the campus activities of which they were a part.

GBQ Individuals. Participants also described having an orientation toward comparing themselves with fellow GBQ individuals on their campuses, usually but not always to gay cisgender men. Both Diego and Austin discussed how, when meeting a fellow gay man, they felt that romance and sexuality were automatically factors among each person, creating potential tension, conflict, and barriers among gay men. Austin discussed that, because the gay community “seems to be so small all the time,” the question of whether there was a romantic attraction or not “almost [prohibited a person] from even becoming friends,” as someone could feel as if they were competing with that person for other sexual partners. Diego also noted this tension in his interviews, though

talked about how he felt judged and compared with other men for how “masculine” or “feminine” he was presenting in front of other gay men. Presenting more masculine sometimes meant being seen as more attractive and more viable as dating material by other gay men, whereas presenting more feminine meant sometimes not being seen as sexually attractive by others. Both Diego and Austin admitted to engaging in this competition and comparison themselves, as well as shoring up others for dating potential. This behavior, each claimed, led to a disconnect among many gay men on their campuses and, at times, isolation from the broader GBQ community on their campuses. William, a White gay cisgender man, talked about this tension as happening more so on social media (viz., Instagram) than occurring always in person. Masculinity in the gay community, William discussed, was “all about competition”: who slept with the most men, who had the most social media likes and followers, and who was the most “attractive” in their social media posts. William was repulsed by these displays and talked about the gay community on his campus as being “promiscuous.” Nevertheless, William also mentioned that his assessment of other gay men may have been a result of his own “internalized homophobia” and how he viewed other GBQ people.

Anthony, a White bisexual cisgender man, discussed the tension he felt in GBQ circles around his sexuality. He described being bisexual as sometimes “[feeling] a little bit like you’re toeing the line,” where other GBQ people did not see him as “totally queer” and straight people did not see him as “totally straight.” Moreover, he described that he felt his peers perceived his sexuality through the lens of who he dated. If he was dating a woman, he would be seen as straight; if he was dating a man, gay. Despite

acknowledging that his GBQ friend group had been more than vocally supportive of him—and that several of his friends identified as bisexual and queer—he still felt as if he did not quite fit in with the rest of his GBQ peers on his campus. Anthony's example illustrates that bisexual and queer men may face unique challenges in their sense of belonging in GBQ communities compared to gay men, as well as differences in how they may see themselves in relation to other GBQ men.

Taking in Feedback About One's Masculinity From Others

> I remember [my friend] came to watch me speak at some admissions thing. I was on this panel, and he came up to me after, and he was like, "Really, first of all, great job. . . . I'm really proud of you, you were passing so well up there. And I remember you were crossing your legs, and I was in my head, I was like, [Mitchell], don't do that. And then, you changed the way that you're sitting, and it was more masculine, and so it was like, oh, great, he's got it." And it was this weird—it was like, wow, I'm not used to having people in my life now that are that critical and that nitpicky. Because a better friend and one who saw me as a whole person obviously wouldn't say that in general, right? (Mitchell)

Participants often described feeling pressure to conform to certain ways of expressing masculinity, or as Ahmed (2006) describes, "to follow the lines" of hegemony (p. 175). This conformity was accomplished either due to external policing by fellow student peers or because of an assumed attraction to straight men, which aligns with current literature centered on heterosexual cisgender men around external policing of masculinity and sexuality (Reigeluth & Addis, 2016). Participants also remarked that they had a hard time

balancing expressing as feminine or as masculine, depending on the audience with whom they were surrounded.

Policing of Masculinity

Several transgender participants described their experiences around having their gender policed by fellow students on their campuses; specifically, there were judgments or consequences if they did not dress or behave in ways that conformed to what their peers deemed to be White masculinity. As a transmasculine nonbinary person, Jay was comfortable expressing more masculine or more feminine, depending on how they were feeling. Because their campus did not provide gender-neutral housing, they made a decision to live in the male-specific housing, as they felt that was the best decision for them and most (if not exactly) aligned with their identity—a decision they remarked during their interviews that they "would still hold up with." However, because of their genderfluidity, Jay had noticed marked differences in treatment by their male peers based on how they presented. When they expressed as more masculine, they were listened to in class, people "paid attention during group discussions and listened to what [they had] to say," and their "personal space was valued more as a man." And although they were seen as a "gay man" and as an "outsider" on their campus, the aforementioned experiences around their gender were still true. Conversely, when Jay expressed as more feminine, "the less [they were] respected" and given space by other men. Thus, the consequences to not "follow the lines" of White masculinity were grossly apparent for Jay.

As a transgender man, Samuel also felt pressure to orient himself toward "stereotypical themes of masculinity," but not solely from cisgender men; instead, he

described experiencing some of these pressures from fellow transgender men. On his campus, Samuel has witnessed transgender men "who think they have to conform" to hegemonic standards of masculinity (i.e., denigrating women, appearing bulky and strong, having a deeper voice, etc.) because that was seen as a way to be validated by others in one's manhood. Samuel has also seen this among gay cisgender men, specifically in having his attractiveness rated on how much he was conforming to traditional notions of masculinity (i.e., conforming to White masculine norms was often seen as more attractive by others). Mitchell had also experienced this pressure from transgender men, as illustrated in the exemplar quotation for this subtheme. After speaking on an admissions panel for his institution, a transgender friend of his who had watched him made detailed critiques on his masculine gender performance on stage, including his leg-crossing style, the depth of his voice, and other forms of posture.

Several cisgender GBQ participants described pressures that they felt from other GBQ people—particularly gay cisgender men—not to act too feminine in order to belong to the larger group. William described his concern around femininity in the presence of gay men on his campus: "I wonder if I'm being too feminine for people. . . . Some gays do not like feminine men at all." He described that acting more "masculine" was "hard" at times, as "being femme" was more natural and congruent with his identity. Rhett also faced similar concerns when he arrived to campus his first year of college. Newly out and away from home, Rhett wanted to act more feminine, as he felt more comfortable and excited to do so; for example, he wore makeup and more "fashionable" clothes. However, he remarked how "critical gay people [could] be of other gay people being too gay or too

straight-seeming," and found himself "overcorrecting" several times in order to feel like he mattered to his peers (both gay and straight). Once Rhett found his grounding and a solid group of friends, he was finally able to express as femininely as he wanted. Diego also experienced this tension: As someone who described himself as "not overly feminine" and "not overly masculine," he sometimes felt "at odds" with other men—including gay men—because he did not "fit the bill" for what it meant to be a gay man. Consequently, Diego sometimes censored himself around gay friends if he noticed what they liked did not match his likes or interests.

Finally, Natanael described his struggles to express appropriately masculine in front of gay men in terms of his body image. He described "[wanting] to be skinnier and more muscular," which he identified as being tied with how he wanted to be seen masculinely. The idea of being "fit" resonated with him in how he believed he should appear in regard to his masculinity and queerness. Consequently, a number of participants oriented their masculine performance (i.e., not being too "feminine") with wanting to "fit in" with other GBQ men and transmasculine individuals on their campuses. The attempts to do this often left participants stressed and sometimes more ostracized from GBQ and non-GBQ students. This gender policing had consequences for participants in that it lowered their self-confidence, heightened their distrust of and isolation from those who were making such remarks, and made them hyper-aware of how they appeared to others.

Policing of Sexual Attraction Toward Straight Men

Participants also discussed that the lines of White masculinity that they were expected to follow included their sexual attractions and where and how their desires were

allowed to be expressed (at least publicly). One of these expectations—named by Ibrahim and Garrett, each of whom attended more rural institutions in politically conservative areas—was making it clear to others that a participant was not sexually interested in straight men. Ibrahim described that it was his dream to join a fraternity in college, as he expressed that every "masculine gay" man wanted to have "those Greek letters on his Instagram." However, Ibrahim found himself a sexual minority in his fraternity, surrounded by straight men, with a desire to fit in with his brothers. He described an experience where after bonding with one of his brothers, they went to the bathroom, and he wanted to stay behind: "I'm going to be uncomfortable if I stay there . . . all of them pee in front of each other." He believed that he would make his fraternity brother "uncomfortable" because he knew he was gay. Garrett also had to face these challenges: With a smaller GBQ population on his campus, Garrett was one of the few openly gay students. He described in his interviews how he has had to let his straight male classmates know that he was "not the type of gay man" to hit on them in order to be taken seriously or accepted by other men. Thus, some participants had a heightened awareness around how straight men perceived their sexual attractions to them, whether real or not, aligning with prior research demonstrating that masculinity is correlated to heterosexuality and that being perceived as nonheterosexual may result in not fitting in with others (Woodford et al., 2013).

Seeking Validation From Others

> Yeah, we were like, "you had a target, right? You had a diversity quota?" And they were like, "well, no." But I don't know, no hurt feelings, you want to have a

> representative cast of the people who are at the university. So, I know that could be my imposter syndrome—being [transgender] was my only appeal—but I don't really know, because I'm not them. (Lucas)

Validation was important to many of the participants; that is, participants expressed wanting not only to be affirmed as masculine by fellow peers, staff, and faculty on their campuses in order to have a sense of belonging and identity formation but also to be seen as a whole person. Invalidation often occurred when fellow peers remarked on or questioned participants' masculinity or queerness, or if a participant felt tokenized in one or more of their identities (e.g., as a transgender person, as a person of color, etc.).

Being "Seen as Masculine"

Transgender participants described their desire to "be seen as masculine" by others on their campuses. Lucas, who identified as a White queer transgender man during the interviews (and later, during the member check, indicated that they had recently come out as "transmasculine queer" in their gender identity), talked about their "struggle with inferiority," describing their masculinity as "not quite good enough." They talked about this struggle as "destroying [their] inner transphobia." Most men they encountered on their campus had been those who had displayed "toxic" qualities, such as demeaning women and other minorities and engaging in sexual competition. These displays by other men often made them hesitant to embrace hegemonic standards of masculinity. As a result, they limited their time around men, friending mainly women on their campus.

Taylor noted their "concern" around "passing," which they described as the level to which a transgender person subscribed to cisheteronormative ideals of masculinity.

They put effort into presenting as masculine each day on their campus through their clothing and other accessories, and "what [mattered] most to [them]" was that people "automatically" saw them as a man. This orientation toward passing as masculine was achieved through others' use of language, such as the use of "male pronouns" and descriptors such as "handsome." Therefore, although Taylor felt appearing masculine was necessary for their identity promotion and validation, Lucas struggled with what embracing masculine standards would mean for them and their values, especially in lieu of the men they saw and the behaviors with which those men engaged.

Transgender participants also described how their queer identities gave them some pause and concern around being validated in their masculinity. Upon entering college, Aiden—then, a closeted transgender person—felt "very desperate to be seen as masculine," as they did not want to out themself but also wanted others to perceive them for how they saw themself. Having a queer sexual orientation, Aiden was initially hesitant about also outing themself as being attracted to men, as that could have impacted how others saw their masculinity. Conversely, they did not want to be seen as straight: "I'm either outing myself as queer or [others are] going to read me as a certain gender and read me as straight, 'cause that's the default." Eventually, once Aiden became comfortable on their campus and became socially secure, they felt confident to be out in both their gender identity and their sexual orientation. Samuel also described the tension that he felt with how others perceived his masculinity and with whom he was dating. He described his concerns with being seen as "too hetero" in a "nonstraight relationship" (i.e., being too masculine when dating men or nonbinary people) or "not hetero enough"

in a “straight relationship” (i.e., being too feminine when dating women). These tensions suggest that Aiden’s and Samuel’s masculinities were inherently tied to their queerness and attraction to other men.

Tokenism

Participants also described feeling invalidated in their identities when tokenized by others. A person is considered a *token* when they are “a member of a small numeric minority . . . in an environment with a homogenous dominant group” who “[experiences] heightened performance pressures, social isolation, and stereotyping as a result of their numerical rarity” (Turco, 2010, p. 896). Aiden, Ibrahim, and Carter described being tokenized as people of color while enrolled at their respective postsecondary institutions. Aiden, who described themself as “White-passing,” stated that if people knew they were Latino, they experienced fetishization of their identity that went beyond just simple romantic attraction. Moreover, Ibrahim described having a number of assumptions made about his identities and his cultural background. Based on his country of origin, those he encountered would often ask about “the war” rather than ask him about who he was as a person. Additionally, his peers on his campus often made assumptions that his Muslim identity clashed with his sexuality and that he experienced significant homophobia in his home country. Ibrahim disputed this, describing his experiences in his country of origin as “less” homophobic at times than in the United States.

Carter noted that he was one of the only out GBQ people of color on his campus, with other students in his same class leaving after their first year due to “racism and homophobia.” Carter described several instances where he was tokenized; for example,

after being asked to "model for [the university bookstore's] Christmas collection," he noticed that the participants were overwhelmingly racial minorities, with one White student present (his campus was around 90% White). Furthermore, he described his relationship with women as complicated, as many straight female peers had approached him during his tenure on his campus to declare that they were his "GBF (gay best friend)" despite barely knowing or just meeting him. Therefore, Aiden, Ibrahim, and Carter were all able to articulate times on their campuses where they were only seen through a singular lens, and those experiences felt degrading and dehumanizing.

Several participants also described being tokenized by people in authority. Lucas remembered their tenure as an orientation leader on his campus as an overwhelmingly positive experience. Nevertheless, despite knowing they had "good qualifications to get the job," they believed disclosing their transgender identity to their future supervisor during their interview may have secured their spot, as the orientation department's staff were "really trying hard to get a diverse group of people." This suspicion became more solidified during an orientation-leader training. While discussing ways of supporting transgender students, the conversation among student leaders became more animated, with several individuals asking questions and stating their confusion over the material. With their supervisors not stepping in and saying something, Lucas felt they had to out themself and to educate their fellow peers on transgender issues; at that moment, they noticed their supervisors "nodding." They noted that they felt like they were there to serve a purpose that was not theirs to serve. William noted a similar tokenizing experience from a faculty member. As an openly gay man on his campus, William often

wrote about sexual- and gender-minority topics in class. Instead of writing something that was “queer-related” or “related to gender-bending,” he chose a different topic, making the professor “shocked” that he would write something beyond his experiences as a sexual-minority student. Despite both the supervisor and the faculty member stating support for Lucas and William at other times, respectively, these displays of tokenization made these students feel one-dimensional and invalidated in their whole identities.

Struggling With Masculinity in Connection With Other Identities

> People tend to react with, that's a lot to take in [that I’m queer, transmasculine, Latino, and a first-generation immigrant]. And that can be positive where people will be like, oh that's a lot to take in and maybe celebrate. And they have that tone about it like, congratulations, you have these identities that you get to own and say! And that's cool. And then a decent amount of time, particularly with newer people in my life, it'll be a little bit like, OK, that's a lot, can we ignore part of it so that this is easier for me, I guess? (Aiden)

A number of participants discussed being oriented toward wrestling with their masculinity in conjunction with another identity; identities named included one’s sexuality, race, religion, sex assigned at birth, and nationality. Both Chan (2017) and Jourian and McCloud (2020) discussed the tensions GBQ students of color faced with their Filipino and Black identities, respectively, and being a sexual-minority during the undergraduate experience. Moreover, participants’ orientations toward their sexuality and gender identity often were focused on internalized oppression, where some individuals

described difficulties with embracing those aspects of their identities based on prior socialization.

Multiple Marginalized Identities

Struggling with having multiple marginalized identities was an orientation several participants described within the interviews. Both Aiden and Diego highlighted conflicts around their Latino and queer identities, discussing both cultural and familial expectations around masculinity and how queerness made those around them question their gender. Aiden, for example, talked about "machismo culture" growing up; when asked to describe how they defined it, they told a story of their male cousin kissing another boy as a child, and their family exploding in fear and disgust at the action. Queerness, therefore, was contradictory to masculinity in Aiden's past experiences. And in college, Aiden described their struggle with being seen for all of who they were, especially as someone with multiple marginalized identities as queer, transgender, Latino, and a first-generation immigrant. Diego's familial experience was similar; though not mentioning machismo explicitly, he discussed his family's "conservative" views on sexual- and gender-minority communities. On his campus, he had difficulties finding queer spaces that were not primarily or solely White spaces. Moreover, he recalled one experience at "a group for LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) folks" where participants joked that he "was in [the] group for diversity." One of the few opportunities he has had to meet other Latino queer people was on the Latino living-and-learning community in his residence hall during his first year of college, which afforded him the ability to make friends he considered to have shared life experiences.

Ibrahim also discussed the challenges he has faced navigating multiple marginalized identities on his campus. As a queer, undocumented, Muslim man of color, other students saw his identities as being in contradiction to one another, "[causing] people to misunderstand and reject [him] as [a] human being." Ibrahim was assumed by peers on his campus to struggle with his sexuality, and many asked about his home country, assuming that most there were "homophobes." Despite those challenges, he embraced all of his identities. In turn, as students who have navigated being GBQ students of color at predominately White postsecondary institutions, Aiden, Diego, and Ibrahim have all had to face microaggressions from students around their identities, while also attempting to stay resilient in the face of adversity and marginalization.

Internalized Biphobia, Homophobia, and Transphobia

Many participants' orientations of their masculinity were correlated to feeling uneasy, an aversion to, or self-loathing about their sexual orientation or gender identity; that is, there was some level of overt or covert internalized oppression (i.e., biphobia, homophobia, and/or transphobia). O'Neil et al. (1986) describes masculinity as inherently tied to perceived heterosexuality, so it is not surprising that GBQ men and transmasculine individuals may face some sense of struggle with their masculinity, sexuality, and being transgender. Adam, Anthony, and Benjamin—all of whom identified as cisgender and attracted to people of multiple genders (i.e., bisexual or queer)—described some form of uneasiness around their sexual orientations. Adam did not necessarily name an overt concern for being queer once matriculating (other than fearing his parents would discover his sexual identity); however, he described finding it to be "almost a taboo" to discuss

with others the people he does and does not like sexually. As a first-year college student, Adam had recently begun to embrace his sexuality more openly but was still concerned about how he talked about that with others. Benjamin also did not feel the need to discuss his sexual attractions with friends, including talking about his sexual identity as bisexual. However, because he has not spoken about his bisexuality often, when he has made reference to it, he has worried that his friends think he says those things "for attention or something" or that his friends "didn't fully believe it, maybe." Anthony, however, was more explicit in his orientation toward internalized biphobia: "I think being bisexual can, at least for me, can be a destabilizing element to my masculine identity." Anthony discussed his sexuality as making him "more insecure" about his masculinity, and in turn, how he has been "accepted" by "straight people," particularly "straight men." Moreover, he sometimes found himself "[overcompensating]" in his gender performance when he embraced his bisexuality and queerness more openly, such as deepening his voice and using colloquialisms (e.g., "alright, thanks man") that he normally would not say. Thus, several nonmonosexual participants all indicated some orientation around internalized biphobia.

Other participants named how internalized oppression impacted how they saw themselves and how they related to others. Samuel discussed how he "repressed [his] trans identity" for years. From his religious tradition, he was told that "if you're trans, if you're gay, then you have a demon in you." This orientation toward being transgender and being queer still resonated with Samuel in college and has impacted how he has been able to accept himself and to come to terms with his identity. Rhett also described, as a

result of staying closeted around his sexuality for many years, feeling a sense of "shame" for being gay, though he has been "definitely" working on improving this. Despite that, he stated within the interviews that he still does not know if he would be "100% comfortable with being gay in general, alone or [his] private life or anything."

Natanael, however, described wrestling with internalized homophobia differently. He shared that he has explored his sexual attractions, observing that his desires were primarily toward "cis men, masculine cis men," which he found "just straight up sexist." Moreover, he talked about his previous sexual relationships, particularly with more femme-presenting men. Upon reflection, he recognized that some of the issues or challenges that he faced with his former partners were a result of femmephobia and "internalized homophobia [showing] up in [the] relationship." Therefore, for a number of participants, internalized feelings of oppression impacted how they viewed themselves and their identities within their college contexts, their self-esteem and their self-worth, and how they related to other people.

Navigating Hegemonic Masculinity on Campus

Navigating White masculinity on campus was challenging for many participants, but experiences on how they did this varied based on students' identities, presentations, and campus cultures. First, participants named institutional policies and practices as sources of support for countering the harmful impacts that White masculinity had on them. Student-organization and leadership-development programming, intentional housing, curricular inclusion of gender issues, and the intentionality of asking for student pronouns at campus events were all described as policies and practices that aided (when

such supports were present) or hindered (when such supports were absent) students in their masculine identity development, enabling their ability to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Second, students discussed their ability to find community across their multiple identities, including their masculinity. Generally, White gay cisgender participants had easier times finding like-minded communities on their campuses than participants of color, transgender participants, and bisexual and queer participants, mirroring what previous literature has found regarding GBQ undergraduate students with additional marginalized identities (Catalano, 2015; Duran, 2019; Jourian & McCloud, 2020; Strayhorn, 2018). One's ability to create community was often dependent on the visibility of sexual and gender minorities on one's campus. Finally, participants described instances where they maintained their physical and psychological safety (both real and perceived) by leaning into hegemonic masculine stereotypes (i.e., projecting strength, lowering their voice, dressing in baggy clothing, etc.). This use of hypermasculinity supports previous research, particularly Anderson (2002) and Anderson-Martinez and Vianden (2014), which discussed how White gay male collegians utilized exaggerated masculine traits to control and to maintain their safety within their postsecondary educational environments. Participants often realized that staying safe on their campuses sometimes meant they had to change their gender performance in front of strangers to become more hypermasculine so that they would not be bothered or harmed.

Finding Support Through Institutional Policies and Practices

> So the second year, I finally went to . . . whoever assigns housing . . . and I said, "I don't feel comfortable, I would like a place with a more private shower in a

> private room. I can't [have others walk in on me] anymore." And I had to apply for an accessibility service. And I had to use a medical condition to get it. So I had to apply and ask for it, not because I'm trans, but because I have anxiety about being trans at [college]. And then each year, I had to reapply for it. So last year, when I was talking with the man that assigns housing, he did not mention that I had to reapply for it, and I was late. So I actually had to fight with the woman who helped with the accommodations. And she said, "Look, we're throwing you a bone here." And I said, "I'm sorry, but I'm just trying to get my accommodations." And I mentioned Title IX, and all of a sudden, I got a call the next day from the dude who assigns housing saying, "So here's your apartment number. Who were the roommates that you wanted again?" (Jay)

Pronouns

Many participants—whether transgender or cisgender—stated that institution-sanctioned events (e.g., orientation, classes, etc.) where students were asked to share their pronouns if they wanted was an indication to them that they could orient themselves as their gender expression (and sexual orientation) on their campuses. Aiden, Diego, and Lucas all remember the first day of their first-year orientation where their orientation leaders asked them to share their names and pronouns. Diego shared that doing this was a "little thing" that "became a big thing," as he "internalized" the messaging behind this practice as his university respecting who he was as a gay cisgender man. Lucas felt an immediate sense of "trans visibility"; although they chose not to disclose they were transgender to friends and peers until a few months into college, they remembered

orientation as being a "good experience" because of moments where it was noted that they could show up as their full self. Aiden stated that they considered their orientation leaders "role models" for practicing this in front of other students, many of whom may not have been asked such a question before. Moreover, they remembered the name on their tag being listed as their deadname[12] and was not questioned by their student leaders when asked to make a new one. These moments, despite seeming "little," set the groundwork for these participants' orientations toward college as a place where they could deviate from the mandated scripts of masculinity that they had learned prior to attending their postsecondary institutions (Ahmed, 2006).

Pronoun usage was also reported by some participants as being extended into their classrooms, which gave these students a sense of validity and visibility in those spaces in order to participate. Mitchell described his college campus as being "the first time that [he] was in a place where people were asking for pronouns." He described those opportunities to disclose (if he so chose) as "really, really helpful" and "[making his] life so much easier" that doing those checks were a part of the cultural norm of his institution. Natanael described the same experience and feelings, stating the appreciation around the "effort" faculty and staff made within those spaces to give people visibility to be seen as the gender they were. Moreover, Natanael explained—even as a cisgender student—that asking those prompts gave him reason to believe "there were queer people . . . in [his] immediate environment," reducing a sense of isolation that he may have felt in those

[12] A *deadname* is "the birth or legal name of a transgender or gender-nonconforming person" (Freeman & H. Stewart, 2018, p. 429).

moments. Both Liam and Samuel described pronoun prompts as routine in their classes, with professors respecting both those and chosen names. Taylor described similar experiences, though they made note of their professor who has had a difficult time remembering which pronouns to call them. However, they described their professor as making an effort, as he "has been very good about asking [them] if he has called [them] the right pronouns." For Taylor, they considered this validation of their gender identity and masculinity in their classroom space.

Housing

Housing was a major concern for several participants as they entered their postsecondary institutions; whether or not their housing was intentionally set up by the institution to provide space and validation to express their masculinity fostered additional orientations around how to express their gender on their campuses. Both Samuel and Taylor had positive experiences on their campuses' gender-neutral floors. These spaces allowed participants both to meet other transgender and sexual-minority students and to alleviate stressors related to their living situations, including privacy around changing, sleeping, and showering. Samuel described his gender-neutral living community as a "tighter knit group of friends." Taylor also described their housing situation in similar terms, stating that residents had an "understanding" of each other's life experiences around being transgender. In fact, this type of residence-hall floor was "one of the really big factors" in Taylor's decision in selecting and attending their college.

However, others' living situations were not as positive. Jay did not have as good of an experience; the housing on their campus was completely gender segregated through

the man–woman binary, making it difficult for transmasculine nonbinary individuals like Jay to find a space that was safe and affirming for them to use. They described their relationship with their residence life office as difficult, as Jay has had to "fight" for a private apartment and shower using their accommodations request system on their campus (i.e., "because [they have] anxiety about being trans at [college]," not "because [they are] trans"). Gender-neutral housing (or the lack thereof) created an orientation for some participants on what it meant to be a transgender man or a transmasculine nonbinary individual on their campuses.

In contrast, Diego had a positive experience in his living community. Instead of it being a gender-neutral floor, it was a living-and-learning community for Latinx students. In this space, he was able to meet his roommate, a gay Latino man, and another student down the hall, who was bisexual. However, beyond that housing community on his campus, the vast majority of people with whom he has interacted have been "very White," including other sexual- and gender-minority students. As a result, one of the few opportunities he has had on his campus to meet GBQ Latino men—or Latino individuals of any sexuality—has been in his first-year-living situation.

Housing, therefore, was a large influence on a number of participants' orientations around how they would relate to other people and see their own masculinity and sexuality viewed across campus. Gender-neutral housing is often primarily associated with serving sexual- and gender-minority populations on college campuses, though usually students of all sexualities and gender identities are welcome to live in such facilities (Willoughby et al., 2012). However, such housing not only allows students

to live in facilities that are congruent with students' identities but also provides natural connections and community building among residents in those spaces who often have similar connections and life experiences around navigating homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.

Classrooms and Curricula

Several participants discussed their excitement and appreciation for being able to discuss gender issues and masculinity within one or several of their classes, as well as for having supportive faculty who oriented students into understanding different ways of expressing masculinity. Both Carter and Rhett described taking classes that discussed masculinity in depth. Carter said his class helped him understand his own identity, "[helping] bring definition to stuff" that he did not realize was present for him in his masculinity. Prior to taking his sociology course, Rhett had "never formally been taught anything on sexuality and gender," and so that class was an opportunity for him to understand his identity more comprehensively. This curriculum—though limited to certain classes—provided these participants an opportunity to discover and to critique their own masculinities in ways that had not been afforded to them before.

The support of the faculty also went a significant way in class. Aiden recalled a psychology professor of theirs who they described as more masculine in nature (i.e., neither hypermasculine nor feminine). There was nothing remarkable about the professor's gender presentation except that "every once in a while . . . he had his nails painted." Aiden's memory notably recalled the fact that the professor was not attempting to enact a performance but also did not seem to be phased by the potential reaction of his

students. This gender performance of their professor's masculinity provided Aiden with an orientation of realizing they, too, could present their own version of masculinity on their campus.

Austin, as a gay man, recalled the "incredible amount of acceptance" that he had received from his faculty in classes. This expression of support within the classroom allowed him to be comfortable outing himself as gay to other classmates and provided him the confidence to speak in class or "contribute to a conversation." In other words, faculty modeling—whether through their own expressions and performances of masculinity or through their support of queer identities—provided Aiden and Austin (as well as other participants) a signal from their institutions that they could be themselves and not necessarily follow the preset script of White masculine norms that they had been taught.

Cocurricular Programming

Campus programming was named by many participants as an opportunity for them to explore their own identities and to gain moments of awareness of (a) the scripts that they had learned around gender and (b) the ways that they could potentially deviate from those scripts. Carter, Diego, and Lucas were all orientation leaders at their respective campuses; however, both Diego and Lucas described those experiences as instrumental in shaping their masculine identity development. During their student-leader trainings, each participant engaged in sessions focusing on gender, though Lucas recalled the experience as being subpar and—as a transgender person—felt like they needed to educate their fellow peers around being transgender due to the "outdated" materials the

facilitator was distributing. Nevertheless, Diego described how being an orientation leader allowed him to "navigate spaces with students from different backgrounds" for the first time, providing him space to "[acknowledge] stereotypes and biases" that he had about other communities. Moreover, he was able to connect with other orientation leaders—particularly straight cisgender male students—who he had avoided during his tenure on his campus because of an assumed lack of interests or connections. And despite their negative experience in their class session, Lucas appreciated being able to connect with staff from their campus' LGBTQIA+-specific office, getting opportunities to get connected with other programming that focused on transgender- and queer-student experiences.

A number of students described their involvement with their campus' LGBTQIA+ student organization as a way that they were able to explore their masculinity and to orient themselves to new ways of seeing their identities outside of hegemonic standards. Jay, Carter, and Garrett all described being leaders within their campuses' LGBTQIA+ student organizations. Jay and Carter, for instance, have been able to share their narratives around their sexual, gender, and racial identities through their participation on speaking panels in front of fellow students, staff, and faculty. These panels have not only allowed them to educate others on their campuses about queer experiences but also provided each participant opportunities to hear and to understand their own narratives as they spoke them. Each participant also described their student organizations as a place to find LGBTQIA+ community and a safe harbor from cisheteronormativity on their campuses.

Some participants also shared their experiences not being involved within an LGBTQIA+ student organization. Before attending their current institution, Samuel had attended a community and technical college in Minnesota; he was "sure they had a [Gay–Straight Alliance] club," but there was "no sense of community" at that college, and no clear understanding of where and when that organization met as a group. Benjamin knew of his campus' LGBTQIA+ student organization through email, and had some friends who attended group meetings, but neither felt a need nor a desire to go to group meetings, as he described his bisexuality as not being the most salient of his identities.

Peter did attend his campus' student-organization meetings, but harbored some resentment with how his college advertised it: "I was really expecting more outward support than just walking by someone's office and seeing a pride flag and one poster in a 100 being pro-LGBT." He believed his campus needed to do more to promote their LGBTQIA+ student organization and other services aimed toward sexual- and gender-minority students, rather than "claiming to be so diverse" and "just sticking [LGBTQIA+ students] in a classroom and calling it a club." Thus, although an LGBTQIA+ student organization may exist and even provide some solace of safety and support for students, how the institution signals support for those groups and for LGBTQIA+ communities overall makes a difference in how students orient themselves to those experiences and to their own sense of identity development.

Finding Supportive Community Within One's Multiple Identities

> I think I definitely know that I'm still different. I think it's just a mental thing where . . . it's just hard to describe beside the fact that I'm different but in a good

> way. Some people don't like to be different. I have to my knowledge there were two other [students at my college] just like me who are gay and of a minority race, and they're not here this year. They dropped out because the racism and homophobia [were] too much for them to handle. And they did not like being that much different. But I, on the other hand, don't mind it. And I think it is a strength of mine to stand out, whether you think it's as a sore thumb or as a flower or something else positive. (Carter)

Many of the participants described their experiences and sometimes difficulties in finding communities on their campuses that were supportive of their identities, including sometimes multiple marginalized identities. In participants' descriptions, finding support more easily was often correlated with having a larger amount of visibility for GBQ students or other sexual- and gender-minority students (e.g., GBQ students of color) on their campuses. Moreover, not experiencing this support was often correlated to feeling there was a lack of community on their campuses, especially for GBQ transgender students and GBQ students of color.

Visibility

Being open, expressive, and critical of one's masculinity often coincided with feeling that GBQ students were represented and visible on their campuses, especially for those who had additional marginalized identities. Samuel, Austin, Adam, Taylor, Mitchell, Anthony, Diego, and Rhett all described experiences of meeting people like them—often for the first time—within their residence halls or classes, signaling to them that they could deviate from the masculine scripts onto which they had held from

childhood. First, finding such a community instilled confidence in meeting other people. For example, Austin described one of the first days in his residence hall, where he met another gay friend and was asked by him to "[knock] on every door" on his floor in order "to meet everyone" who lived there. That support from another gay man gave him more confidence to meet others on his floor, including those who identified as straight cisgender men, individuals with whom he would not have immediately thought he could connect based on his primary and secondary school experiences.

Second, a visible LGBTQIA+ community provided signals that they were not alone in identifying as GBQ or transgender. Adam, who began to become more open about his sexuality upon transferring to his most recent college, "[saw] the rainbow flags everywhere" on his campus, met other openly GBQ people, and began to think that "there must not really be anything wrong" with being queer. Just within the first 8 weeks of his first year on his campus, Adam had started to date both men and women, as well as explore his sexuality and what that has meant for his masculine identity. Moreover, Rhett had assumed that there would not be "very many" gay men when he arrived for the first time to his campus. But upon meeting a number of fellow peers who identified as such, he realized that there were many ways to be masculine and gay and that he could deviate from the scripts around masculinity to the extent that he wanted (i.e., by embracing femininity).

Finally, participants described the sense of community that they felt upon realizing there was a broader LGBTQIA+ community on their campuses. For instance, Taylor met five transgender men on their residential floor: This experience opened their

eyes to the plethora of ways that transgender men could express in their masculinity and that, in fact, there was a community of people who would accept them for how they wanted to express, "not necessarily [fitting] the stereotype of [a] straight man." Anthony and Mitchell described the comfort and openness they felt around being near their respective queer friends, experiences which they did not necessarily have prior to attending their campuses. Diego reiterated his experiences with his living-and-learning community during his first year on his campus, where he was able to connect with other GBQ Latinx men. Knowing he was coming from "a predominately White area to another predominately White institution," meeting people like him was important and significant. Overall, a number of the participants talked about how "an established community" of LGBTQIA+ students gave them the ability to create connections and to explore who they were as individuals rather than conforming to the scripts set out for them by hegemonic masculine standards.

Lack of LGBTQIA+ Community

Despite many participants describing LGBTQIA+ visibility on their campuses, others noted the lack of such a community. Some noted that despite visibility for some within the LGBTQIA+ community on their campuses, there was a lack of community that represented them in their identities (e.g., GBQ students of color or GBQ transgender students). For example, Aiden remarked that they saw "representation of gay men" at their institution, but little representation of bisexual or queer men, or of transgender people as a whole. The representation on which they remarked included posters, focus of conversations in curricular or cocurricular programming, and general visibility on their

campus. Jay described that although there was representation of a somewhat larger LGBTQIA+ community on their campus, transgender visibility was small. They stated that they knew other transgender students attended their college, but that many were "too scared" to come out based on the ramifications of what it meant to be transgender or queer at their postsecondary institution.

GBQ participants of color noted the lack of other GBQ students of color—or sometimes students of color of any sexual orientation—at their campuses. Ibrahim noted that his college was "not really diverse," with many "closeted" gay men on his rural campus and few students of color at all. This lack of community made Ibrahim follow scripts around masculinity to which he had not ascribed before, including interests in farming, hunting, cars, and "cowboy stuff," as the out gay men both on his campus and in the greater community were interested in those things. Ibrahim also made efforts to connect with people off campus in order to connect with GBQ people of color and transgender people. Carter described himself as one of the only GBQ men of color on his campus (others of which he knew had dropped out due to sustained "racism and homophobia"), as well as the only student of color or LGBTQIA+-identified person on his athletic team. He described calling his parents within 1 week of matriculating to question why he had chosen to attend his institution when he had assumed—based on campus-marketing materials—that it was supposedly more racially and sexually diverse than it was. Nevertheless, he was able to find a community on his campus and connected with both his teammates and LGBTQIA+ students, though he felt and knew that he was seen as "different" on his campus by some of his peers based on his multiple identities.

Samuel described feeling somewhat isolated as a mixed-race queer transgender man of Asian and Hispanic decent, not "[having] that sense of community" around other LGBTQIA+ people who were mixed-race. Most of the sexual- and gender-minority students he had encountered on his campus were "White LGBT people." Moreover, in most of his classes, he often had been "the only non-White person in the room." And because he "can appear racially ambiguous," others often had mistaken or invalidated his identities and had not seen him as fully mixed-race. These experiences sometimes made him "feel alienated" from others on his campus and not provided him opportunities to connect around how his race, gender, and sexuality interconnected with one another. Natanael described having queer and transgender friends of color on his campus; however, as a mixed-race queer cisgender man of Black and Asian descent, he has seen few Black men on his campus (of any sexuality). Moreover, he described the relationships among men of color on his campus as "really fraught" and feeling discomfort in being connected with other "cis and straight men of color" at his institution despite wanting to be. In fact, he remarked that most of his friends have been "either queer cis women" or "cis women of color." And Diego, despite meeting other gay Latinx friends on his residential floor his first year, consistently has seen an LGBTQIA+ community on his campus that has been dominated by White students. Diego recalled attending a meeting at his campus' LGBTQIA+ center space, but left shortly after because every person in the space was White; he did not simply want to connect with others based solely on his sexuality. Thus, not having a visible LGBTQIA+ community on their campuses—or having one that was dominated by White gay cisgender men—

limited participants' ability to relate to other people, to experience different ways of expressing themselves, and to orient themselves away from White masculine standards.

Maintaining Safety Through Gender Expression

> Well, I know for sure I slip into that more jock personality whenever I'm in the dorms, or . . . in the designated areas, because I know I don't want to act too feminine. Because all it takes is one drunk person to come up and bop me in the nose while I'm in the middle of an exam and have no way to defend myself, and now I'm on the floor bleeding, cool. I wouldn't say I turn [my feminine expression] off ever, but I will turn it down. . . . Sometimes it's a Monday, you just don't want to be bothered with it—you're like, whatever. . . . I'm always on guard for it. Not just that type of personality, but just that type of bad situation. I'm a plan-for-the-worst person. (Peter)

Safety was a major concern for many of the participants—either real or perceived—based on their gender presentation, gender identity, sexual orientation, or racial identity. In the face of these threats, participants often were oriented toward displaying hegemonic forms of masculinity in order to keep themselves and their friends safe from violence or harm, aligning with some of the previous literature (Anderson, 2002; Anderson-Martinez & Vianden, 2014; Hunt et al., 2016; Sánchez & Vilain, 2012).

Presenting More Masculine

Jay expressed their gender in fluid ways on their campus, sometimes dressing how others would perceive as more masculine and sometimes as more feminine. However, Jay's safety has been directly impacted based on how they have presented. For

example, they discussed going to parties on their campus with other students, many of whom were in the same social groups. When Jay presented more masculinely (e.g., baggier clothing, no makeup, deeper voice, etc.) their space was respected; fellow students would leave them alone and not deliberately touch their body. However, when Jay presented more femininely (e.g., tighter clothing, makeup, jewelry, etc.) around the same group of students, they were "sexually assaulted" by men with whom they lived on the same floor, "getting grabbed" without consent. They clearly saw "how quickly people's attitudes about [them] changed" based on how they conformed to hegemonic standards of masculinity. These behaviors align with literature showing that heterosexual cisgender men believe they are deserving of bodies who they perceive as female, along with having no clear understanding of what consent means (Shumlich & Fisher, 2018).

Other participants described monitoring their safety by changing their demeanors to be more oriented with what others may consider hegemonic masculinity. Samuel, Taylor, Rhett, and Peter have all been harassed both on and near their campuses—sometimes on a regular basis (e.g., at least "monthly")—for being GBQ or transgender based on how they have presented their masculinities. This harassment has included people following them, calling them anti-LGBTQIA+ slurs, or characterizing them as evil (e.g., calling them "Satan"). Both Samuel and Taylor described being mindful of their presentations in front of straight cisgender men on their campuses, as they tended to be the culprits of such language and actions. Both Rhett and Peter, however, described changing their behaviors. Rhett described how, when in a dark area with female friends, he subconsciously changed his gait and tone of voice to "act" and "sound a bit more

straight," respectively. He was not aware of these changes until his friends pointed out that, in moments of stress or fear on his campus, he turned into a "straight boy." However, Rhett was conscious of these behaviors in other ways. When around women, he remarked that sometimes he has behaved and has talked more femininely so that those around him assumed he was gay in order to "[reduce] their anxiety or stress in that moment," as he did not want them to perceive him as a threat. Peter described a similar—though more conscious—behavior that he called his "jock-boy personality." As a student who has gotten stares and slurs thrown at him for how he dresses and for being out as gay, Peter was hyper-aware that he could be the target of violence at any moment. As a result, when alone or in a situation where he has been threatened, he has slipped into this "personality" in order not to "act too feminine" and to stay free from harm. Therefore, masculinity—and, in particular, hypermasculinity—was seen and used by some participants as a tool to maintain their physical and psychological safety on and near their campuses.

Avoidance of Straight Cisgender Men

Both Liam and Lucas described the intimidation that they had of straight cisgender men and how that has impacted them showing up on their campuses, particularly in avoiding those types of individuals at times. As a transgender man, Liam stated that his experience on his campus had mainly been positive, though he believed a lot of that was due to the COVID-19 pandemic and being afforded the opportunity to stay in his room. However, one issue that he has faced on his campus has been the restrooms, as the ones in his residence hall were gendered male. He has not felt comfortable going

into either a men's or women's restroom, and has often planned his day around using the men's restroom in his residence hall during a time when he has believed no one else will be using them; or, he has walked across his campus to the student center to use the gender-neutral restrooms in that building.

Lucas described their reaction to straight cisgender men as being "terrifying physically," as "they grew up having the world excused for them." During their interviews, Lucas stated that being able to pass as a cisgender man has helped with their perceived safety, including with altercations with other men outside of campus. However, Lucas described feeling conflicted around using their perceived male privilege as a shield for safety, and questioned why their masculinity allowed them to be "seen [as] more human" by men in the community. And despite "passing" and being afforded the privilege that comes with being seen as male, Lucas still described their intimidation with straight cisgender men. In turn, both Liam's and Lucas's abilities to foster relationships and to show up fully in spaces—even being able to use basic facilities such as restrooms—were hindered based on a perceived threat that straight cisgender men on their campuses could harm them for being transgender.

Agency and Desire to Resist Hegemonic Masculinity on Campus

Although participants had to deal with hegemonic masculinity on their campuses and navigate its consequences to survive and to thrive within their settings, many participants also had opportunities within college to unlearn traditional concepts of masculinity and redefine their genders for themselves. Although not all students entered their postsecondary education with a rigid and hegemonic understanding of masculinity

(often, there was nuance and understanding of gender expression upon matriculation; see Anderson, 2009), many described their experiences within college—namely, meeting other GBQ individuals, exposure to curricular and cocurricular programming, and being away from family members—as catalysts for recognizing what many participants described as harmful or hurtful attitudes and behaviors embodied by White masculine standards. Nevertheless, some participants described barriers in understanding; generally, White participants had a more difficult time than participants of color in understanding how their racial identity impacted their masculinity and sexuality, often not seeing a connection beyond "having privilege" around one's race (Bonilla-Silva, 2015). Additionally, participants described redefining their gender identity and expression, sometimes through fluidity or a new gender identity altogether, or through just rejecting harmful stereotypes around masculine performances, which is congruent with what Jourian (2017) found with undergraduate transgender participants.

Many participants also articulated finding their agency during their undergraduate tenures around creating positive change on their campuses around social equity. This agency often was facilitated through involvement in activism (e.g., student organizations) or through personal action within their spheres of influence. Other participants described their interviews within this study as eye-opening in their own journeys around understanding how masculinity has impacted them. Many discussed that they had never thought critically of their own masculinity, and some described this research as an opportunity to explore a new way of thinking about their gender entirely. This change in agency and self-understanding by some participants aligned with this researcher's critical

theoretical approach to this study, which aimed to "promote social change by raising consciousness and correcting injustices" (Patton et al., 2016, p. 25).

Unlearning Hegemonic Masculinity

> In my mind, this questioning [of gender roles] has not to deal with gender identity but portrayal of also masculinity. Because while I have pride in myself, and I am fairly self-confident—and would say that I'm a self-confident individual—I would still not walk around wearing a dress because of the way that society perceives that and the way that everyone makes a split-decision about people. And that sometimes disappoints me to know that that's how life is. And not saying that that's not something that could be changed or to be challenged, but because these societal ideas and how other people would perceive you in that way are what they are right now, that is what is causing me to not dress in other certain ways like that. (Austin)

Several participants described college as "a fresh start," one where they did "not [know] anyone" and could live their life as a "blank slate" away from one's parents, family, and other peers with whom they developed. Thus, participants' orientation toward masculinity, although aligned more toward hegemonic standards (i.e., avoidance of femininity, competition among other men, and adhering to family customs), was malleable and open to change in light of the tension with their conformity to such masculinity and their gender expression and sexuality. The primary way that students unlearned hegemonic masculinity was in recognizing their own privileges, whether that was through their gender (i.e., masculinity) or, if applicable, race (i.e., Whiteness).

Moreover, several participants described questioning their gender, even citing participation in this research as a catalyst. Barriers to unlearning their socialized orientation toward masculinity were namely shame or uncertainty in how to move past their privilege and in changing their attitudes and behaviors away from toxic masculine standards.

"You Can't Unsee It": Recognizing Privilege

Many participants described their college experience as being an opportunity to learn and to recognize their own gender and racial privilege and what that meant for them in terms of their own lives. Several participants described understanding their masculine privilege in the context of being transgender; specifically, they began to understand the respect and deference people gave to them when talking or providing their opinions in comparison to when they were perceived as more feminine previously in their lives. Aiden reflected on a student-organization meeting at which they were speaking where "the amount of room that was given to [them] was surprising" because of the presence of women in the space who had more experience than them. They described that moment as being pivotal in recognizing their masculine privilege: "Once you see it, you can't unsee it." Mitchell, who had attended an all-girls high school as a transgender man, discussed being cognizant of "gender dynamics" in his college classes. Specifically, he has thought about the space that he has taken up in classes at his postsecondary institution, as well as how his female counterparts have perceived him. Mitchell also has worried about the "stress or harm" that he has unintentionally created for female students on his campus, particularly when walking at night, thinking about how he has "[comported] himself" so

that his presence was not "threatening" to others. As a person who was assigned female sex at birth, he has been cognizant of how men may appear to women in their posture or demeanor despite not intending to create harm. Moreover, Mitchell stated that he has witnessed his peers being sexually harassed; as a cafeteria server, he has not had to think about being grabbed or stared at while working.

Several cisgender participants talked about college as being an opportunity to explore their privilege. Austin stated that he understood how to critique masculinity and the problems that came with embodying certain stereotypical traits. However, although unlearning had happened, there was hesitancy to action; for example, Austin described the idea of wearing a dress as something that should not be a gendered performance. However, he stated that he would "not walk around wearing a dress" because of society's expectations—and consequences—around wearing such a piece of clothing. Rhett described how experiences in college (e.g., meeting other people, engaging in classroom discussions) had made him aware of the privileges that he possessed as a White gay cisgender man, acknowledging that he was "more [accepted]" by others than those who were gay and Black or Latinx. In his second interview, Adam—who had been at his current institution for 8 weeks at the time of interviewing—stated that prior to college, he had not really thought about his gender. As a result of participating in this research, Adam stated that the questions asked in both interviews made him "think about masculinity at a conscious level" and how it has impacted his life in a way that he had never discussed. Thus, conversations about male and White privilege raised participants' levels of consciousness around issues of power and oppression, as well as how those

dynamics translated into their own lives. However, this knowledge did not always translate into an understanding of what to do next.

Questioning Gender

Several participants discussed how college gave them the opportunity to explore and question their own genders. Ibrahim discussed his masculinity and talked about questioning his gender a year ago; he wrestled with the idea that he could be "androgynous" or a "trans woman" based on his concerns around traditional masculinity and not fitting in with many of its tenets. However, he did come to the conclusion that he identified as a man, mainly because he did not feel "dysphoric" in his body, seeing his bodily features as congruent with his gender expression. Liam and Lucas, both transgender men, discussed pondering the question of whether they actually identified as men or as nonbinary individuals who were also transmasculine. Liam was hesitant to identify as nonbinary because he believed that it meant he must "see [himself] as female" in addition to being male, which he felt was incongruent with how he saw himself.

Lucas, conversely, discussed being more open in identifying as "transmasculine queer." They shared that the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to being forwarded this research study, made them realize that it was "time to start thinking about [their] gender identity in a more serious context." In this exploration, they questioned whether the identity of a "man" fit them anymore, as they had been exploring their gender expression and femininity in recent months. Upon completing the member check survey, Lucas expressed that after their final interview a month and a half prior, they had "spent lots of time reflecting afterwards" and that they were "in fact queer" in their gender identity.

Therefore, college—and in the case of at least one participant, this research study—was a catalyst for several individuals to critique their masculinity and whether adherence to hegemonic standards or the label of "man" itself was meant for them anymore.

Maintaining Orientation Toward White Masculinity

One of the largest barriers that participants discussed around attempting to disorient themselves from the predetermined lines of White masculinity was not understanding how their dominant identities impacted their experiences or how to move beyond just simply learning about their privilege. White participants echoed this theme, describing not being able to connect how their gender and sexual identities related to their race. Benjamin, for example, acknowledged and understood that he had White privilege; however, when asked about how his Whiteness, bisexuality, and masculinity were related to each other, he noted that he did not "see a super big connection." He was able to see some connection with Whiteness and masculinity (being in the majority culture) and bisexuality and masculinity (in that others might not see those identities as congruent), but unsure how his bisexuality and Whiteness impacted each other. Liam and Austin also discussed being White and how they each felt it was important to treat people of different races with respect and with no judgment. This orientation toward race among these participants is congruent with how many White people in the United States see their relationship to race and racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). Neither described the impact that White privilege has had in their lives, though each acknowledged that racism exists within the GBQ male community.

Natanael talked about his cisgender privilege and the importance of him interrogating cissexist and misogynistic attitudes and behaviors he has harbored, both consciously and unconsciously. He described the “shame” he has felt for such privilege existing in the world, as well as shared the fact that while in college, he has not felt as if he has had the “emotional energy” to critique some of these internalized biases in the ways he would have liked. Consequently, an orientation toward White masculinity was difficult for many participants to overcome, even when faced with their privilege and power, as well as having motivation or intention to question such attitudes and behaviors.

Redefining Masculinity

> I guess that also gets into where I feel like being necessarily a man isn't also me, because I feel like that's also just the opposite of me. . . . I feel like I'm not even a gender necessarily, I’m just there. Because I tried to seem masculine, because I want to represent as a male. But then also, the things that I think of with being masculine is also how I don't see myself, which is how it's the opposite of me. And I think that's especially where society and my family members get confused with, because masculinity, it's seen a certain way. And when they think of it, they don't think of me. Because they know me, and they know that I don't really map with how society really sees as masculine. (Liam)

Many participants discussed in their interviews that as a result of the “blank slate” afforded to them by attending college, as well as unlearning standards of hegemonic masculinity, they had or wanted to attempt to redefine what masculinity meant to them. This redefinition came up in one of two major ways: (a) rejecting misogyny and

misogynistic stereotypes of masculinity in their own gender performances and (b) seeing their own masculinity as fluid and capable of changing, even if in conflict with societal expectations.

Rejecting Misogyny

A number of participants described that the orientation toward traditional masculinity had shifted as a result of consciousness-raising around issues of power and oppression and that they did not associate themselves with those hegemonic standards as closely as they had upon matriculation. Anthony resonated with this idea in that he saw "masculinity to be a less significant part of [his] life" now that he was in college; he felt "less in touch" with "traditional" masculinity than when he first started at his institution. Although he was unsure how others perceived his masculinity, he viewed this shift as being mindful of how he has treated others by respecting those who shared minoritized identities, particularly being cognizant of how he has furthered misogyny. Aiden discussed their rejection of stereotypes of what it means to be masculine; namely, they were cognizant about how their behaviors might "[disrespect] femininity" and harm women. Their gender performance, they realized, did not need to rely on denigrating or demeaning women in order to gain the respect of fellow men. Diego also discussed how he was trying to feel more comfortable "whenever [he engaged] with different people" and not trying to worry about whether he was appearing more "masculine" or "feminine." Instead, Diego wanted to be seen as the most "genuine" version of himself; this meant potentially shifting his gender performance at different times and in various situations, which he stated that he was beginning to embrace.

Several participants also explained their realizations that being masculine does not equate to being a man, or vice versa. As a cisgender man, Rhett mentioned his struggle with this, as he had been "attracted to the idea of femininity" since he was young. Clothing, makeup, styles, and accessories that were marketed primarily toward women excited and interested him in ways that traditionally "masculine" things did not. When first coming out and entering college, this preference caused struggles for him in his identity as a man. Rhett since concluded that he did not "necessarily need to be a woman to enjoy the things that women enjoy." This understanding has provided a "weight taken off [his] shoulders," as he became less worried and anxious about how others perceived him in his masculinity.

As transgender students, Taylor and Liam have dealt with many people throughout the years invalidating their identities as a result of being perceived to be the least bit "feminine." Nevertheless, each have become somewhat more comfortable with the idea that being masculine does not encompass their whole gender identities. Taylor described their rationale for how they thought about gender was that "masculinity [equaled] man." Coming to college and interacting with transgender men, however, provided them insight into what masculinity could be and gave them solace that they could be more flexible in their understanding of masculinity within their own gender performance. Moreover, Liam had begun to question whether "being a man entirely [was] still [him]." Although he knew being a woman was not congruent with who he was at his core, he also questioned whether orienting himself to a strict script of hegemonic masculinity has worked for him. This critique has come about because he has realized the

problems with traditional, “toxic” masculinity and did not see himself through that lens. Liam wanted to be perceived through his gender identity as someone who was masculine but also opposed to ideas of misogyny. Thus, breaking from an orientation of misogynistic ideologies and understandings around masculinity has been a “queer moment” for many participants in their shift toward their masculine performances not having to adhere to a White hegemonic script (Ahmed, 2006).

Masculinity as Fluid

In addition to rejecting misogynistic ideals around masculinity, many participants described their masculinities and gender expressions as “fluid,” though this concept of *fluidity* meant different things to different people. Aiden described masculinity as “what it means to [them] in the moment,” not necessarily restricted by certain stereotypes, norms, or expectations for themselves or others around them. Moreover, they saw their identity as a transmasculine nonbinary person as providing a sense of empowerment, as they—not others—made the decision to create this gender for themselves. They also saw their masculinity as inherently tied to their queerness, experiences as Latino, and other identities; for them, queer meant “refusing to give a full answer,” and they have come to a realization they owe no one an answer for their existence or their identities. For Jay, masculinity was “another way for [them] to express” themself. Although they have utilized masculinity as a way to express their gender that has been contrary to expectations placed upon them at birth, they have also grown less worried about how others will react to them performing in ways that might be perceived as feminine. Moreover, Jay has deemphasized the “labels” of masculine and feminine and placed more

concern into how they want to express each day, though also taking their safety into consideration.

Carter and Lucas talked about masculinity as a "spectrum," where there were many possibilities to express oneself. Carter talked about that spectrum as having the possibility to be oriented toward White masculinity (what he called "really heavy masculine") and to be oriented away from those standards; he considered himself to be on the latter. And although Lucas mentioned a spectrum, they also described gender through the use of a "jawbreaker" analogy, with gender and others' perceptions (i.e., "the wrapper") on the outside, and how one feels "comfortable" as one gets closer to the "center." They sensed masculinity was close to their center, but had started to question if they were "not a trans man but . . . more transmasculine queer" (which they indicated they were in the member check survey). This shift, Lucas explained, was partially because they wanted to disorient themself from hegemonic standards that conflated masculinity with misogyny.

Mitchell described himself as potentially being "postgender"; that is, someone who was "really confident in being a transgender person" and defies what it means to be masculine. Although identifying as a man, he felt comfortable expressing how he wanted, no matter how others perceived him. He identified as "male because that [was] who" he said he was, and he did not believe that he had to orient himself to hegemonic scripts in order to embrace what he considered masculine performances. Taylor described that they felt it was important to "observe both [their] femininity and [their] masculinity." Although they embraced masculinity more so than other gender expressions, they have

begun to see a role for femininity to play in their lives, especially with the support of their queer friends on their campus. They also described the freedom of not having to label themself "with one gender or the other," but simultaneously appreciated the ways that they could lean into masculinity or femininity to express themself in any given moment.

Finally, Peter stated that he did not "think of [his] identity as masculine." Though he acknowledged others may describe him that way, he thought of his gender expression as however he felt on a particular day; he best encapsulated his gender identity by describing as if someone took "different weird shit and threw it in a blender." For Peter, this could mean wearing certain clothing or accessories, talking or walking in various ways, or showing up to spaces (e.g., engaging in group discussions) in different manners. Thus, particularly as a result of their tenure in postsecondary institutions, these participants felt more comfortable to shift away from an orientation that mandated certain expressions and expectations around masculinity and instead embraced their own definitions that allowed them to perform gender in the ways that they felt the most comfortable in any given moment.

Discovering One's Agency to Change Surroundings

> I think the biggest thing, when I think about the age of 18 and becoming an adult, I think about how for so many years, I didn't think that I was going to live to be an adult. . . . I feel like anything past 18, it's a frontier, it's uncharted territory, the Wild West. I'm just making my way through it. I guess that's a big distinction I make . . . with masculinity, my life after 18 is whatever I make of it. It's not dictated by other people. (Samuel)

In addition to becoming disoriented from hegemonic masculinity and oriented more toward claiming their own definitions of what it means to be masculine, several participants also described a newfound sense of agency within college to create positive change in their communities, particularly around advocating for an improved campus climate for minoritized students. This agency was articulated mainly through a desire to change one's own behaviors (e.g., resisting perpetuating behaviors that were transphobic, racist, etc.) as well as pursuing activist activities on one's campus, usually through involvement in a campus' LGBTQIA+ student organization.

Changing Behaviors

Several participants discussed their desire to change their behaviors to hold both themselves and others around them accountable for oppressive behaviors (e.g., for comments and expressed attitudes that demean minoritized communities). Natanael discussed needing to be aware of his own "irrational defensiveness." When called out on problematic behaviors himself, he described wanting to resist denying and deflecting from what he said or did and instead listen to those who were calling him out in an attempt to comprehend how he could modify his behaviors moving forward to be less oppressive to others. He stated that while in college, he has been called out on ways that he has used his masculinity (e.g., dominant attitudes in certain situations) to impact others negatively (e.g., women and transgender individuals), but that he has not always responded in ways that he believed were productive to change. Natanael focused mainly on attempting to critique the ways that he has furthered misogyny and cissexism. William described wanting to be an "instigator"; that is, he was not too concerned with the

reactions people may have if he were to bring up problematic attitudes or behaviors he noticed. Specifically, William stated previous instances and a future intention to call out racism, particularly within his gay circle of friends and his family members, as those have been the social networks from whom he has heard discriminatory language the most often.

Both Aiden and Austin described a willingness to confront others over problematic behaviors, but also discussed how participation in these interviews had raised a certain amount of consciousness around how they viewed gender and how they wanted to engage with others on these issues. This change in understanding aligns with critical methodologies in that they aim to raise awareness and agency in participants to create positive change in their lives and their surrounding communities (Patton et al., 2016). Aiden discussed feeling more comfortable around confronting people over misogynistic behaviors; they talked about wanting to have "the courage to say something," but disclosed that they often interrupt only because they care about that person and their perspective. Aiden said their participation in this research has broadened their perspective on gender and both how they related to masculinity and how they wanted to change their behaviors moving forward. Additionally, Austin described how participation in this research made him more eager to bring these perspectives up with those around him, particularly in the classes of which he was a part. Therefore, orienting behaviors away from White masculine norms—particularly away from denigrating or dehumanizing minoritized communities—was a significant subtheme that emerged from participant narratives.

Activism

Additional participants described finding agency to create change through their involvement in LGBTQIA+ student organizations on their respective collegiate campuses. Upon arriving at his institution, Garrett had noticed that the LGBTQIA+ group was defunct. Because he felt the support from his campus' administrators, he had the confidence to help relaunch the group. Moreover, he has helped plan and enact programming, including their "Coming Out Day" festivities and other events. As a result of participating in this study, Garrett also raised the possibility of planning a workshop focused on queerness and masculinity, as his interest in the topic had been raised. Garrett also remarked that, because of his role in both the LGBTQIA+ student organization and other leadership groups on his campus, many individuals who were closeted on his campus (which Garrett described as being the majority of the LGBTQIA+ community at his rural institution), have "[pulled him] to the side or [have talked] to [him]" on social media about their sexuality. He felt glad that he was able to support others and to make somewhat of a difference in students' lives.

Both Jay and Carter have become involved in LGBTQIA+-specific panels hosted by their campus' LGBTQIA+ student organizations. Jay felt empowered to tell their story—particularly to staff and faculty—so that they could hear what they had encountered on their campus and attempt to make changes for future students who are transgender, specifically around providing gender-inclusive facilities. Carter has used his influence on his campus to get non-LGBTQIA+-identifying individuals to come to panels of which he was a part, particularly members of his athletic team who were all White,

straight, and cisgender. He knew that discussing "what it means to be a mixed-race gay man on a . . . White heterosexual Christian campus" could help influence his peers' orientations around masculinity and sexuality, which could also translate into conversations that they could have with male friends outside their team, as well as people outside of campus with whom they were acquainted. This experience has transformed how he has oriented himself to the broader landscape on his campus, from "feeling like a weed" in the grass during his first year to now "a lovely flower" alongside other students at his institution. These actions suggest that these participants were utilizing their privilege in an attempt to advocate not only for themselves but also with other marginalized students on their campuses.

Participants' Perspectives on Emerging Themes

All participants were sent a member check survey along with preliminary themes and subthemes that I had generated based on the thematic analysis that I had performed on all interview transcripts (see Table C2 and Appendix D). Out of the 19 participants, 11 completed the postinterview member check within the 2 weeks provided to do so; the general feedback of the member check can be seen in Table 1. Nine out of the 11 participants who completed the member check stated that all of the themes and subthemes resonated with them in some way. Two of the 11 participants stated that some of the themes and subthemes did not resonate with them:

- Austin, who stated that the following themes and subthemes did not resonate:
    - "foundations of hegemonic masculinity" (and all corresponding subthemes), and

    - "performance of hegemonic masculinity on campus" (and three of the four corresponding subthemes, except "comparing and competing against other men," which did resonate with him).
- William, who stated that the subtheme "sustaining family relationships and traditions" did not resonate with him.

For those who elaborated on their responses, many stated that the themes related to their college experiences. Jay stated that the themes resonated with them, "as [they were] able to experience both the positive and negative aspects of masculine identity after coming out as transgender." Aiden reflected that the foundations of hegemonic masculinity corresponded to what they had thought about gender when they matriculated and that the other themes "accurately described" how they had navigated hegemonic masculinity during their undergraduate tenure. Ibrahim stated that he "[related] to all of them," while remarking that he felt many other queer men do, as well. Additional participants agreed with the themes and subthemes, but made some caveats. Benjamin stated that the themes did resonate with him, although "maybe to a different degree"; nevertheless, he did not elaborate on what that meant for him. Carter stated that the themes and subthemes "accurately [described his] experiences," whereas also remarking that they were "broad enough that many LGBTQ+ folx could identify with them" while also not being "generic."

For Austin, none of the subthemes corresponding to foundations of masculinity resonated with him. He did, however, note some resonance in the one of the subthemes corresponding to performing hegemonic masculinity. These responses were congruent

with what Austin said during his interview, as he had been out as gay since early high school and had already been disoriented from hegemonic norms around masculinity prior to matriculation. Moreover, William did not resonate to the subtheme corresponding to family traditions; this was also congruent with his interview answers, as William stated that he had significant issues with how many in his family handled themselves (e.g., around homophobia and racism)—particularly his father—and that he did not want to emulate those attitudes and behaviors himself. The member check demonstrated that, overall, the themes and subthemes generally reflected what participants had articulated during each set of interviews. Any dissonance with themes or subthemes by specific participants corresponded with the answers given by those individuals within their transcripts. Consequently, this member check provided some assurance of the credibility of this investigation's methodology and findings (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Morse, 2017; Peden-McAlpine, 2020).

However, I did rename Subtheme 2B from "performing masculinity in 'acceptable' ways" to "taking in feedback about one's masculinity from others." This was done because I believed that subtheme title better encompassed the orientations described through participant narratives, as well as avoided confusion with Subtheme 2C, which focused on validation from other men on campus.

Conclusion

Participants generally spoke about reorienting themselves to their relationship with White masculinity during their time within college. Although some participants spoke about their disorientation with White masculinity prior to matriculation, most

stated that their consciousness around what conforming to hegemonic masculinity meant for them was a result of interacting with GBQ peers on their campuses, learning and discussing masculinity and gender within classroom settings, attending cocurricular programming and student-organization events, and experiencing a larger GBQ community than they had prior to entering college. Table 3 illustrates this study's themes and subthemes, some of the previous studies that align with specific subthemes (that were primarily focused on how GBQ men and/or transmasculine individuals made meaning of their masculinity within their undergraduate experiences), and the primary demographic focus of those studies' participants. Table 3 delineates that although a number of subthemes match what has been found in prior studies, those studies often focus on a particular subset of the GBQ undergraduate community.

Though this study's findings were congruent with a number of previous literature's narratives around GBQ collegiate masculinity, there were also some emergent themes found, particularly in the context of there being limited, often demographic-focused research on GBQ men and masculinities within the college experience. The themes and subthemes discovered from this study can provide important guidance and pathways for student affairs researchers and practitioners in how to move forward in better understanding and serving GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals within postsecondary education. Chapter 5 reflects on the findings of this study and remarks on the implications of this research within the higher education field, potential future research questions to explore, and practices and programming recommendations to enact.

Table 3

Comparison of Themes and Subthemes With Previous Literature on Gay, Bisexual, and Queer Undergraduate Students and Masculinities in Higher Education

Subtheme	Study	Demographic focus [a]
Theme 1: Foundations of hegemonic masculinity		
1A: Avoiding being seen as feminine	Catalano (2015)	Mostly White and multiracial transgender men
	Edwards & Jones (2009)	Mostly heterosexual men; included two White gay men
	Jourian (2017)	Bisexual and queer transmasculine individuals
	Jourian & McCloud (2020)	Black queer transmasculine individuals
1B: Maintaining control over one's surroundings and other people	Jourian (2017)	(see Subtheme 1A)
1C: Sustaining family relationships and traditions	Chan (2017)	GBQ Filipino men
Theme 2: Performance of hegemonic masculinity on campus		
2A: Comparing and competing against other men	—	—
2B: Taking in feedback about one's masculinity from others	Anderson (2002)	White gay men
	Catalano (2015)	(see Subtheme 1A)
	Edwards & Jones (2009)	(see Subtheme 1A)

Subtheme	Study	Demographic focus [a]
Theme 2: Performance of hegemonic masculinity on campus		
	Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly (2013)	Black gay men
2C: Seeking validation from others	Anderson (2002)	(see Subtheme 2B)
	Catalano (2015)	(see Subtheme 1A)
2D: Struggling with masculinity in connection with other identities	Jourian & McCloud (2020)	(see Subtheme 1A)
Theme 3: Navigating hegemonic masculinity on campus		
3A: Finding support through institutional policies and practices	Chan (2017)	(see Subtheme 1C)
3B: Finding supportive community within one's multiple identities	Chan (2017)	(see Subtheme 1C)
3C: Maintaining safety through gender expression	Anderson (2002)	(see Subtheme 2B)
	Anderson-Martinez & Vianden (2014)	White gay men
Theme 4: Agency and desire to resist hegemonic masculinity on campus		
4A: Unlearning hegemonic masculinity	Edwards & Jones (2009)	(see Subtheme 1A)
	Jourian (2017)	(see Subtheme 1A)
4B: Redefining masculinity	Chan (2017)	(see Subtheme 1C)
	Jourian (2017)	(see Subtheme 1A)
	Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly (2013)	(see Subtheme 2B)

Subtheme	Study	Demographic focus [a]
Theme 4: Agency and desire to resist hegemonic masculinity on campus		
4C: Discovering one's agency to change surroundings	—	—

Note. Studies included are those that explicitly analyzed or described GBQ undergraduate men and/or transmasculine individuals and their experiences around meaning making of their masculine identities within their postsecondary educational experiences. Studies focusing on masculinity in higher education that (a) did not break down individual demographic categories and/or (b) did not explicitly remark on the experiences of GBQ undergraduate students within their findings were not included within this analysis. "—" indicates there was not a transferable study found within the previous literature based on the aforementioned guidelines.

[a] If a study has been referenced in a prior subtheme listed in the table, direction is given on where to find the demographic focus of that study in a prior subtheme (e.g., see Subtheme 1A).

Chapter 5:

Discussion

In this chapter, I explore how the findings from this study (a) are transferrable to previous studies on masculine identity development in higher education, (b) illuminate new insights into the ways that GBQ men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculinities within the context of their undergraduate collegiate experience, and (c) leave unanswered questions that could be explored by higher education researchers. Additionally, I discuss implications for what these findings could mean for student affairs professionals and faculty in their work and in their research with undergraduate GBQ men and transmasculine individuals, including policy and cocurricular-program recommendations based on both participant narratives and existing literature. Finally, I address limitations to this study, as well as what was done to mitigate and to address these limitations in order to bolster the trustworthiness and phenomenological rigor of this research's findings.

Positionality

My research interest in looking at White masculinity among sexually minoritized undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals was directly correlated to my own experiences as an undergraduate student at the University of Minnesota. During that period, a major metamorphosis for me was coming to terms and accepting myself as a gay man after years of self-shame and repression. I was taught that being gay was antithetical to manhood, and growing up in Catholic primary and secondary educational systems, this was reinforced through religious and spiritual ideologies. After coming out

between my sophomore and my junior year in college, I quickly became involved with activism in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and other sexual- and gender-minority (LGBTQIA+) communities on my campus, finding a new passion that excited and energized me in ways that previous interests had not.

However, my work in this area was shortsighted, self-serving, and myopic in that I viewed my identity solely through my sexuality. My sexual orientation was the identity that was most salient to me at that time, and I failed to realize how my Whiteness, maleness, and other many dominant social identities impacted the way that I approached equity work and how I showed up in various spaces. Specifically, I did not understand how systems of White masculinity influenced how I treated women and people of color in student-leader spaces, saw myself, viewed my relationships with other men (especially other GBQ men and transmasculine individuals), and managed my mental health. Only after I began the difficult work around reflecting on my own racial narrative and deconstructing what it meant to be not only gay but also a man and White (and other identities) was I able to approach social justice work in a more authentic, humble, collaborative, and holistic way. The trajectory my identity development took during my undergraduate years influenced how I have engaged in student affairs research, and consequently, has made me passionate about understanding how systems of White masculinity impact the identity development of GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals. Therefore, my positionality has fundamentally impacted how I developed my research question, approached the interviews with participants, analyzed the data, and developed my results.

Implications for Future Research

The findings illustrated in Chapter 4 provide several pathways and questions for future research on masculine identity development in GBQ undergraduate students. First, some of this study's findings mirrored those from prior research—including those that focused on heterosexual cisgender undergraduate men and those that focused on GBQ undergraduate men (and to a lesser extent, GBQ undergraduate transmasculine individuals)—through exact parallels are limited due to the lack of research studies focusing specifically on GBQ masculinity in college. Second, additional findings from this study stand out as emergent from prior research, answering questions that had not been directly addressed in previous literature or that had been addressed by studies that were limited in their demographic and methodological scopes. Third, because my methodology was not only inductive but also transformational, a number of participants described their involvement in this study as raising their consciousness around their own masculinities and even in how they saw their own gender identities. Finally, the findings from this study raise questions for future research around GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals, including those that emerged from this study's themes and subthemes as well as those that were left unaddressed from Chapter 2.

Congruence of These Findings With Previous Literature

Many of the themes and subthemes corresponded to previous literature[13] on both heterosexual and GBQ men and transmasculine individuals within higher education

[13] See Table 3 for the themes from previous literature on GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals making meaning of their masculinity within the context of their undergraduate experiences.

settings. These similarities include resisting femininity and maintaining control, performing masculinity in ways congruent to hegemonic standards, being policed around one's masculinity by other students, and unlearning hegemonic masculine standards.

Avoiding Femininity and Maintaining Control

Subthemes 1A and 1B (see Table 2) were congruent between this study's findings for participants and what the literature has illustrated for heterosexual cisgender male collegians in participants' orientations toward masculinity; this was specifically the case with subthemes focusing on avoiding femininity and maintaining control over their affairs and surroundings (Corprew et al., 2014; F. Harris et al., 2011; Reigeluth & Addis, 2016). Although participants were not necessarily oriented toward these tenets themselves or in how they expressed their identities (many participants had engaged in critical self-reflections around their gender during middle or high school), they were able to name those ideals as foundations of hegemonic masculinity prior to matriculation as a result of familial, friend, and media influences.

Comparing Against Other Men

Theme 2 (and all subthemes; see Table 2) were congruent between this study's findings for participants and the previous literature focusing on heterosexual cisgender men's masculine performances in college. Participants oriented their gender performance toward comparing and competing with each other's masculinities (Bartolucci et al., 2009; Fleming & Davis, 2018), considering the "feedback" that they received when policed around their masculine performances or sexual attractions by others, as evidenced by findings from research conducted by both Edwards and Jones (2009) and Reigeluth and

Addis (2016). They also wanted to be validated in their masculinities, sometimes struggling within their gender expressions in relation to other identities—particularly those that were marginalized—which aligns with research conducted by Estrada et al. (2011) and F. Harris et al. (2011) on GBQ racial-minority students.

Policing of Masculinity From Other Students

Subthemes 2B and 2D (see Table 2) reaffirmed what previous literature had found regarding GBQ men and transmasculine individuals in college around being policed in one's own masculine performance and sexual attractions (Anderson, 2002; Catalano, 2015; Edwards & Jones, 2009; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013), as well as struggling with multiple marginalized identities (Chan, 2017; Jourian & McCloud, 2020). For participants, competition included being concerned with how "masculine" a participant was in comparison to another man or transmasculine individual, how "sexually attractive" a participant was in the eyes of another individual, and how "dominant" or "strong" a participant was in relation to others on their campuses. In regard to identities, GBQ participants of color were more likely than GBQ White participants to name their race as salient to their identities and experiences on their campuses, mirroring what previous research has illustrated around how White undergraduate students understand their racial identity in comparison to their peers of color (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Duran, 2019; Hale & Ojeda, 2018). Additionally, GBQ transgender participants were more likely than GBQ cisgender participants to discuss concerns around being validated and perceived as masculine—matching similar findings from both Catalano's (2015) and

Jourian's (2017) studies focusing on transgender undergraduate students—though those concerns were also voiced from several cisgender participants.

Unlearning Hegemonic Masculine Standards

Subthemes 4A and 4B (see Table 2) were congruent between this study's findings for participants and previous studies centering on GBQ men and transmasculine individuals' disorientation toward White masculinity, specifically around unlearning and resisting hegemonic masculine norms (Chan, 2017; Edwards & Jones, 2009; Jourian, 2017; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013). These studies had demonstrated that because of their surrounding environments within postsecondary institutions, GBQ students have opportunities to educate themselves on gender and masculinities, understand their previous socialization and orientations to masculinity, and explore others' ways of performing gender contrary to White masculine norms, providing queer moments to disorient from traditional notions of gender and reorient themselves to new explorations around their masculine identities.

GBQ undergraduates have reported in previous qualitative studies a desire to remain oriented to hegemonic standards or reject them outright, depending upon their situations on their respective campuses (i.e., outness of sexuality, safety, proximity to other LGBTQIA+-identified individuals, etc.; Edwards & Jones, 2009; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013). Therefore, this study's data were congruent with a number of previous findings in the literature with how GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculine identities within their college contexts; moreover, the data also found similarities between how this study's participants and how

heterosexual cisgender men in prior studies experienced and navigated systems of White masculinity.

Emergent Findings

There were a number of themes that emerged in these data that were not present in the literature reviewed, or that expanded upon previous research that had been limited in its demographic scope. These themes include maintaining family traditions and relationships, recognizing a hierarchy among men (and students in general) on campus, seeking validation from other male students, connecting (or not connecting) one's White identity with one's other identities, finding postsecondary institutional supports (e.g., policies and practices) in one's masculinity, maintaining safety through engaging in hypermasculine attitudes and behaviors (across the social demographics of those interviewed), and discovering one's agency to create positive change through resisting hegemonic masculine norms.

Maintaining Familial Relationships and Traditions

A number of the participants described having a strong orientation to sustain family relationships and traditions as a foundation of hegemonic masculinity (i.e., Subtheme 1C; see Table 2). Ahmed (2006) would suggest this is expected, as children are often seen as extensions of their parents, expected to follow the lines drawn out to them by their families; that is, they are predicted to follow the customs that have been predetermined through ancestral traditions. Chan (2017) had found this as a prevalent theme among participants who were GBQ Filipino men in college; however, in this study's findings, participants named continuing family traditions as a tenet of masculine

hegemony across participant demographics around race, gender identity, and sexual orientation.

Recognizing Social Masculine Hierarchy on Campus

Subtheme 2A (see Table 2)—comparing and competing against other men—was not a dominant theme explored in previous literature on GBQ undergraduate students. This study found that participants named their college experience and sexuality as unique to how they oriented their masculinity toward competing with other men, specifically in how they saw themselves (i.e., using either heterosexual cisgender men or gay cisgender men on their campuses as the typical barometer, whether in person or on social media), as well as whether they found themselves worthy of affection or dating by other GBQ individuals on their campuses. Participants also described this competition in terms of a "hierarchy" that existed on many of their campuses, with straight cisgender men usually on top and GBQ men and transmasculine individuals near or toward the bottom.

Seeking Validation From Colligate Male Peers

Subtheme 2C (see Table 2)—seeking validation from others—was a theme found in some literature, particularly around those identifying as transgender (Catalano, 2015). Anderson (2002) also highlighted this theme, though that study focused solely on White gay men in athletics. This study shows that validation around one's masculinity was important for many participants across demographic categories—including bisexual and queer cisgender men. Additionally, a participant's sexuality was a major compounding factor in whether they were actually or were perceived to be affirmed as masculine by other students. That is, participants who were perceived or known to be GBQ often felt

invalidated in their masculinity, and one's queerness was often assumed through the manifestation of what others viewed as effeminate behaviors.

Connecting One's Masculinity, Sexuality, and Whiteness

Subtheme 2D (see Table 2)—struggling with masculinity in connection with other identities—although congruent with previous studies focused on GBQ students of color, was emergent in how White participants navigated their racial identity in connection with their masculinity. White students were mainly split into two schools of orientation around their race: (a) they recognized how their White identity furthered the privileges and societal benefits that they received as a result of being masculine or (b) they did not see a clear connection between being White and being masculine, their sexuality, or other identities. Moreover, many students who fit into the former orientation toward their racial identity struggled with how to move past simply recognizing their racial privilege and transforming that into action toward racial justice (e.g., beyond just attending rallies).

Finding Postsecondary Institutional Supports for Masculine Identity Development

Subthemes 3A and 3B (see Table 2) have been illustrated by previous research focusing on GBQ men and transmasculine individuals, though this research has been geared toward understanding supports for GBQ cisgender students of color in relation to their masculinity (Chan, 2017; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013) or focused on supports in relation to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, not their masculinity specifically (Rankin et al., 2010). The findings of this study revealed that participants across demographic lines—including White participants and transgender participants—found support through institutional practices as well as discovering supportive student

networks on their campuses. For example, many cisgender participants stated that the asking of pronouns at institution-sponsored events helped them realize that they could express themselves in ways beyond conforming to traditional masculine norms.

Maintaining Safety Through Hypermasculinity

Subtheme 3C (see Table 2)—maintaining safety through gender expression—was an emergent theme across most participants. Previous literature had illustrated the use of hypermasculine gender performances to dissipate safety concerns faced in college, but these studies were primarily focused on White gay men, including Anderson (2002) and Anderson-Martinez and Vianden (2014). In this current study, participants of color, bisexual and queer participants, and transgender participants—in addition to White gay cisgender participants—mentioned behaving and performing in more hypermasculine ways at certain times to ward off what they saw as real or perceived dangers toward them, both on and near their campuses. Moreover, several transgender participants oriented themselves toward safety around the explicit avoidance of heterosexual cisgender men on their campuses, which was not a dominant theme in the literature.

Discovering One's Agency to Create Change by Resisting Hegemonic Masculinity

Subtheme 4C (see Table 2)—discovering one's agency to change surroundings—was an emergent theme not seen in the previous literature. The concept of agency itself among GBQ students is prevalent in the literature, but has often focused on self-authorship[14] (see Orozco & Perez-Felkner, 2018) or claiming agency outside of the

[14] *Self-authorship* centers around "a holistic model describing how [students] grow and change and has frequently been investigated in the context of higher education" (Barber et al., 2013, p. 869).

college experience (see Barrantes & Eaton, 2018). In this study, many participants remarked how unlearning hegemonic masculinity and redefining their own masculine identities gave them a sense of power around changing their campus communities. Moreover, several participants named this study as a catalyst for exploring and critiquing their own masculinity or for potentially creating programming on their campuses that devolved into topics on how masculinity impacts GBQ communities.

Emergent Themes Compared to Previous Research

The studies cited in Table 3 tended to focus on a homogeneous group within the GBQ community on college campuses (e.g., White gay men, Black gay men, GBQ Filipino men, Black transmasculine individuals; Anderson, 2002; Anderson-Martinez & Vianden, 2014; Chan, 2017; Jourian & McCloud, 2020; Strayhorn & Tillman-Kelly, 2013), had little representation of GBQ participants (i.e., two White gay men; Edwards & Jones, 2009), or only included transgender or gender-nonconforming students (Catalano, 2015; Jourian, 2017). Though this current study did have its demographic limitations, it also had a fairly representative sample across sexual orientation, gender identity, and racial identity (see Table 1). Thus, although the findings of this study are not generalizable due to its particular ontology, epistemology, and methodology, participants of varying backgrounds were compared and contrasted to find emergent and divergent themes across the narratives that were shared. The data demonstrate that students who have different backgrounds were oriented to White masculinity in slightly different ways and that they—based on power dynamics present within postsecondary institutions—were given or prevented from obtaining opportunities to find community and to claim

agency to reorient their identities away from hegemonic masculine standards (Ahmed, 2006). Therefore, this study's data provided new insights into how GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculinity within their postsecondary educational experiences.

Although there are a significant number of research studies focusing on LGBTQIA+ undergraduate students in higher education—including specifically GBQ male students (and to a lesser extent, transmasculine students)—most of those studies specifically focus on how a student's sexual orientation or gender identity (i.e., being transgender or cisgender) impact how they make meaning around their college experience. There are significantly less studies that focus centrally on how GBQ students' masculine identities play into their personal development and impact their understandings of their college environments (see Table 3). Thus, although many of the subthemes align with previous research findings centering heterosexual cisgender collegiate men's masculinity (e.g., Fleming & Davis, 2018) or GBQ collegiate men's sexuality (e.g., Murchinson et al., 2017), this study expands upon the little that is known around how systems of White masculinity impact GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals during their collegiate experiences.

Transformational Impact of Research on Participants

My methodology was not only inductive but also transformational. I hoped through my use of queer phenomenology to make an impact and to raise the level of consciousness among participants around how they understood and made meaning of masculinity within their own lives, aligning with the critical approaches to this research

(Patton et al., 2016). At the end of each interview, I asked participants to share with me something—if applicable—that they had newly learned as a result of participating in this research process, as well as what they hoped to do with that new information moving forward. Most participants described their participation in this research as illuminating for them, namely in being able to discuss and to explore how masculinity impacted them within their undergraduate careers. And for many cisgender participants, this was the first time that they had ever delved into conversations or explorations about their own masculinity. Moreover, for several transgender participants, this research was a catalyst that sparked questions about whether their identities (e.g., around being transgender men) fit them anymore, as they realized hegemonic standards around masculinity did not fit their values and identities. One participant, in fact, did indicate on the member check survey that they had recently come out as "transmasculine queer" after participating in the final interview.

Finally, several participants described their involvement in the research as giving them ideas on how they could use this information in their own lives, including but not limited to hosting campus programming focusing on masculinity, as well as engaging in conversations about masculinity with their friends, peers, classmates, and family members. Therefore, for many participants, their consciousness was raised around issues of White masculinity, how they conformed or deviated from hegemonic masculine standards, and how they wanted to make change—either in their own identities or in their greater communities—using the information that had been discussed within the interviews.

Additional Questions Posed for Future Research

The findings from this study posed some questions that could be addressed in future research around how GBQ men and transmasculine individuals in undergraduate postsecondary institutions make meaning of their masculinity. Moreover, some of the questions that were raised in Chapter 2 were not addressed in the themes and subthemes found from the data in this study, leaving opportunities for future research exploration.

Questions Elicited From the Study's Findings

Several potential research questions were elicited from the findings highlighted in this study's themes and subthemes. These questions include how GBQ students' sense of agency relates to resisting hegemonic masculine norms, how GBQ students' familial traditions impact their academic careers, how GBQ students' nonsalient sexual orientations impact their masculine identities, and how bisexual and queer cisgender students experience dating in college.

Agency in Resisting Hegemonic Masculine Norms in GBQ Students. An orientation toward agency was a subtheme that was rooted in participants' experiences, specifically around changing oppressive attitudes and behaviors and attempting to create positive changes on their respective collegiate campuses. Although some sources of agency were named within this investigation, student affairs researchers may want to explore how agency around one's masculine identity in college develops in GBQ students. Furthermore, researchers could examine the impacts that student agency has around resisting hegemonic masculinity within the campus communities of which they are a part.

Connecting Family Traditions and the College Experience for GBQ Students. An emergent theme included GBQ students across demographic categories tying hegemonic masculinity to maintaining family customs and traditions. Researchers may want to explore how such customs and traditions around masculinity manifest within GBQ students' attitudes and behaviors while enrolled within higher education, and how adherence to or deviance from such norms relate to students' identity development, academic success, and sense of belonging on campus.

Impact of Nonsalient Sexual Orientations for GBQ Students. A few participants discussed their sexual orientations as not as salient to their identities. Because masculinity was named as a major force by most participants in their understandings around identity, it would be of use to explore what masculinity means for GBQ collegiate students whose sexual orientations are not as salient to their personal identities within their college experiences. Additionally, it would be important to understand how GBQ students' experiences around masculinity are similar to or different from GBQ students whose sexual orientations are more core to their sense of self.

Experiences Around College Dating for Bisexual and Queer Students. Bisexual and queer students—particularly those who were cisgender—named feeling more isolated or apart from the larger GBQ community, especially when it came to social and dating relations with other GBQ men and transmasculine individuals. Researchers could explore how bisexual and queer cisgender men make meaning of dating within their college experience, and how potential pressures around sexual and romantic relationships impact their academic, social, and/or mental health.

Questions Left Unaddressed From the Literature Review

Several questions raised in Chapter 2 were left unaddressed by the findings of this study. These questions include how GBQ students utilize racism to promote their masculine identities, how GBQ students view sex and consent on campus, and how GBQ students' masculine identities impact their mental health.

Use of Racism to Further GBQ Students' Masculine Identities. Perpetuating misogyny and internalized oppression (i.e., homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia) were significant topics found in the data that cut through many of the themes and subthemes discovered. However, although several White participants discussed their engagement in racism, not much was discussed around how participants perpetuated racist behaviors and attitudes. Previous research—centered around heterosexual cisgender men in college—found that participants often utilized oppression as a tool to maintain their sense of worth around their masculine identities. Thus, it would be important to understand the ways that White GBQ men and transmasculine individuals have potentially utilized racism to validate or to confirm their masculine identities during their college experience.

GBQ Students' Attitudes Toward Sex and Consent. Although one participant—Jay—discussed their experiences with sexual assault and masculine performance, this was not a prevalent theme for other participants. Nevertheless, little research exists to demonstrate how GBQ collegiate men and transmasculine individuals view sex and consent within the context of campuses that perpetuate rape culture. Moreover, this study's findings showed that participants did compare and compete against other men around things such as sexual attractiveness and number of sexual

partners. As a result, it would be important to understand how GBQ students place themselves in discussions around sexual assault on campus and how their attitudes toward sexual entitlement impact their beliefs on those topics.

Impact of Hegemonic Masculinity on GBQ Students' Mental Health. Though several participants described their experiences between their mental health and their masculinity, again, this was not a major theme or subtheme among participants. Although some literature exists demonstrating how gay and bisexual men cope with mental health issues (Fischgrund et al., 2012; Pachankis et al., 2018), there is little research that shows how GBQ undergraduate students' sense of masculine identity plays into their overall mental health and whether or not to seek treatment for any concerns, particularly around anxiety, depression, or suicidal ideation. Therefore, a number of questions still exist around how GBQ men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculine identities within the context of their undergraduate experiences, and student affairs researchers have a plethora of questions to ask and to explore in being able to ascertain further understanding in these areas.

Implications for Student Affairs Practitioners and Faculty

Many participants named a number of supports within their respective postsecondary institutions that enabled them to orient themselves away from attitudes and behaviors that conformed to White masculine norms. Additionally, some participants described institutional failings in not doing enough to counter hegemonic masculinity on their campuses. Although White masculinity is embedded within all facets of higher education, there are a number of institutional initiatives and preliminary research studies

that have begun to ascertain intervention strategies to change attitudes, behaviors, and overall campus climates to ones that embrace diversity and fluidity for individuals of all genders, including men and transmasculine individuals of all sexual orientations. For example, many faculty are discussing gender issues in their classroom, and student management systems are being updated to accommodate students who identify beyond the man–woman binary (Yarmosky, 2019). Many campuses also include programs that tackle toxic masculine norms in and outside of the classroom by college men (Quinlan, 2019). Thus, such efforts are aimed in developing policies, practices, and procedures that promote the well-being and success of sexual- and gender-minority students; as well as implementing programming focusing on White masculinity and on LGBTQIA+-community awareness.

The literature indicates that such initiatives have been shown to have promising impacts. For example, many sexual-minority men have reported that feeling a sense of support from their postsecondary institution helps them mitigate the psychological impact of daily microaggressions (Hong et al., 2016). Despite different attempts to address cultures of hegemonic masculinities, critics argue that such policies and programming do not go far enough and that research has produced no clear best practices on how to address educational, programmatic, and procedural ways forward with students, staff, and faculty.

Policies

The policies that participants indicated impacted them the most in their masculine identity development on campus mirror those from previous research studies focusing on

GBQ undergraduate students' identity development. These include the optional disclosure of one's pronouns in groups, classes, or student management systems; intentional housing opportunities for minoritized students; and being provided opportunities within their classes to discuss issues around masculinity, including how hegemonic standards impact them and those around them.

Optional Disclosure of One's Pronouns

A number of participants named the choice of being able to share their pronouns as instrumental in signaling to them that their campus was a space where they could both be themselves and explore their identities beyond the masculine hegemonic scripts to which they had traditionally conformed. This experience was also true for cisgender participants in addition to transgender participants, as cisgender students were able to infer support from their colleges through the use or the absence of this practice in how they expressed and performed their masculine identities. A number of campuses have begun to institute this into their programs, including orientation programming for first-years and transfer students, as well as faculty in their classrooms. As of March 2021, at least 43 institutions of higher education allowed students to use their pronouns on campus records such as class rosters, even providing opportunities to list these on a prospective student's admissions application (Campus Pride, n.d.-a, n.d.-c). Nevertheless, the number of institutions that provide opportunities to disclose pronouns formally is fairly small, meaning many sexual- and gender-minority students do not experience this practice at their postsecondary institutions. Thus, based on participants' narratives around the impact

this made in their ability to explore and to pursue their identity development, higher education institutions must make opportunities like this a priority.

Intentional Housing That Fosters Community for Marginalized Students

Many participants noted that finding deliberate community was needed in their ability to become confident and disorient away from White masculine standards, particularly finding and fostering a community who shared similar identities with them. The largest way participants named finding such communities was through their experiences in first-year housing. Gender-neutral floors or living-and-learning communities provided opportunities for several participants to meet other GBQ students, particularly transgender students and students of color. Meeting other individuals within the GBQ community provided these participants with templates around how they could express their identities in ways similar to or counter to how they understood masculinity as a child, including the use or the nonuse of oppressive attitudes and behaviors.

Starting in the early 2000s, a number of colleges and universities have given attention toward removing or rethinking facilities that reinforce the gender binary. Pioneers in this area included the University of Minnesota and the Ohio State University, each of which converted single-stall gendered restrooms into gender-neutral ones, added gender-neutral changing areas across campus, and provided gender-neutral floors in some residence halls to students, primarily but not limited to those who identified as LGBTQIA+ (Beemyn et al., 2005). As of March 2021, over 270 campuses offered gender-inclusive floors or entire residence halls (Campus Pride, n.d.-b). Nevertheless, such spaces are offered by a minority of campuses, and many QTPOC students can still

find themselves isolated, particularly at predominately White institutions. Consequently, continued and expanded opportunities for gender-neutral floors, as well as deliberate learning communities for QTPOC individuals, are needed to provide undergraduate students an environment where they can develop holistically and be involved in communities to which they may have not been exposed.

Classroom Discussions Around Masculinity

Several participants named their appreciation for being able to discuss gender and masculinity within the context of their classes. This exposure to such a curriculum broadened these students' horizons around what hegemonic masculinity was and provided queer moments around unlearning and redefining what masculinity and gender meant to their lives and experiences. Nevertheless, for most participants who discussed this, these classes were electives and not something that all students were required to take as a part of obtaining a degree from their institutions. This course structure meant that for the vast majority of participants, curricular exposure to theories around masculinity and identity was slim to nonexistent, and a significant number of their peers within their respective institutions had also not taken such coursework.

Because of the issues facing not only GBQ individuals but also all students in higher education around the impacts of hegemonic masculinity (e.g., sexual assault and rape culture, treatment of mental health, microaggressions, White supremacy, etc.), faculty must embed such coursework within their required curricula. More institutions have offered coursework and degrees that focus on men and masculinities but not usually as a part of their core undergraduate curricula (Bennett, 2015). Higher education has a

responsibility to nurture the whole development of students (ACE, 1937), including exposure to identity development within the curricular content of institutions. Again, this aids not only GBQ men and transmasculine individuals but also heterosexual cisgender people.

Cocurricular Programming

Some participants discussed how cocurricular programming—usually through participation in LGBTQIA+ student organizations or campus-leadership opportunities—had reoriented their relationship to hegemonic masculinity and their participation in adhering to its norms. Many institutions of higher education have implemented cocurricular interventions that both directly and indirectly address the issues that White masculinity plays in the overall development of students, including with GBQ men and transmasculine individuals, with limited success.

Diversity Programming

Many institutions have implemented diversity programming, usually through multicultural offices or a first-year seminar (Vaccaro, 2010). For example, research has demonstrated that programming highlighting LGBTQIA+ awareness has been somewhat effective in changing attitudes and behaviors of college men. Increased social contact and education around LGBTQIA+ communities have been shown to be correlated to decreased feelings of homohysteria, homophobia, misogyny, and desires to adhere to hegemonic standards of masculinity (Anderson & McCormack, 2018; Elliott, 2016; Rumens, 2018; Woolley, 2012). These activities can make a difference; however, if done poorly, many students can leave such programs with more solidified stereotypes of

minoritized populations and continued or recommitted adherence to White masculine norms. Moreover, many of these initiatives often fail to delve into issues of power and privilege, keeping conversations at a "surface-level" discussion around issues of difference. This lack of depth into topics around social justice fails to address the core of how White masculinity operates within many undergraduate men, which is to promote ideas of meritocracy and equal opportunity while ignoring structural inequities in society (Collins, 2016; Gurin et al., 2013; Vaccaro, 2010).

Masculinity Programming

Programming that targets male undergraduate students is becoming more common on campuses across the country. First, counseling centers on campuses have attempted to cater to men by appealing to their strengths and reframing counseling as an endeavor where they are in control of the therapeutic relationship (Good & Wood, 1995). Despite seeing some successes in this approach, few undergraduate men who suffer from depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues actually seek formal treatment (E. Watson, 2011).

Second, institutions such as Brown University and the University of Wisconsin–Madison have launched initiatives aimed at addressing toxic masculinity in men, particularly around issues of rape culture, consent, and sexual assault in athletics and Greek life (Scher, 2018). However, these approaches have had mixed to little success working with undergraduate men, as they have almost exclusively catered to White heterosexual cisgender men, often leaving GBQ men and transmasculine individuals out of the conversation.

Third, some postsecondary institutions have implemented initiatives that attempt to bring men into conversations around gender equity on campus. Most gender-equity programming has tended to focus on women but has rarely discussed the impact that White masculinity and the patriarchy have on men (Elliott, 2018). Many scholars have argued for the need for curricular and cocurricular offerings that specifically discuss White masculinity and performances of masculinity that are nonoppressive to individuals of other gender identities and expressions, including discussing the display of emotions, vulnerability, cooperation, respecting others' autonomy, and using one's male privilege to help further gender justice (Davis & Moody, 2018; Matos et al., 2018; Yoder & Zipp, 2018). Moreover, such programming needs to be geared in a way that includes GBQ men and transmasculine individuals within such conversations to prevent the risk that sexual- and gender-minority students would see themselves as exempt from the possibility of perpetuating hegemonic masculine norms.

Limitations of Cocurricular Programming

Critics argue that these types of cocurricular initiatives are limited to specific offices and departments on campus—including gender studies departments and support offices that serve gender- and sexual-minority students—and that in order to remain sustainable, they need to be led and championed by faculty and administrators from across campus (Berdahl et al., 2018). First, programming itself is not a solution. Few programs have been found to be effective at changing men's attitudes that can be generalized to a diverse array of campuses, and institutions entrenched with toxic-masculinity cultures cannot be transformed with a simple training or class that is

occasionally offered (Berdahl et al., 2018; Senn, 2011). Second, most cocurricular programs on campuses that attempt to ameliorate or to change prejudicial worldviews primarily target White heterosexual men on campus. This demographic focus on many campuses leaves out sexual- and gender-minority communities. Moreover, it ignores the fact that many GBQ students also perpetuate systems of White masculinity in their daily attitudes and behaviors, both internalized toward themselves and externalized toward others.

Third, there is little representation or role models for GBQ men and transmasculine individuals—especially GBQ people of color—within postsecondary education (Duran, 2019; Jourian & McCloud, 2020). This lack of visibility often results in less resources to support GBQ students. Finally, many of the programs that are initiated on campus for GBQ collegiate men and transmasculine individuals come from offices that are often "singular identity [spaces]" (Duran, 2019, p. 392), meaning that there is a focus on gender and sexuality but little on other identities such as race, creating what is often an overwhelmingly White space (Catalano, 2015; Duran, 2019). Thus, although higher education has implemented some initiatives aimed at educating broader communities on campus around issues of equity and inclusion, there are still major disparities facing GBQ men and transmasculine individuals on college campuses. Any program that addresses White masculinity must therefore be implemented across an institution for all students, staff, and faculty to participate in conjunction with additional efforts at changing campus cultures to be more equitable and driven toward justice for their communities.

Conclusion

Higher education institutions are spaces in which students are able to ascribe and to make meaning of themselves and the world around them. For traditionally aged students, their college careers are pivotal periods in their lives where they have the ability to explore, to critique, and to discover who they are and how they might utilize the information and meaning they gather during their academic tenures to further both their personal and their professional goals. However, higher education is not a neutral space; histories and legacies of White supremacy, patriarchy, cisheteronormativity, capitalism, ableism, and other forms of oppression have shaped the policies, practices, and programming enacted by postsecondary institutions, often serving those with the most privileged identities while simultaneously enacting barriers and denigrating those who are most marginalized, impacting students' success, experiences, and personal development (Cabrera et al., 2016; Robbins, 2019).

Systems of White masculinity impact how students shape and understand their sense of selves and narratives during their times at college. Significant research has been conducted over the past several decades to understand how such systems create meaning for heterosexual cisgender men, as well as for heterosexual cisgender women. However, until recently, sexual- and gender-minority students have been left out of these conversations despite being disproportionately impacted by White masculinity. Moreover, GBQ men and transmasculine individuals—although possessing marginalized identities—are not immune to being socialized to enact and to continue norms around White masculinity, creating potential harm toward both themselves and those around

them through enacting oppressive behaviors (internalized and externalized). GBQ transgender students and GBQ students of color are even further impacted by these toxic masculine norms.

This study sought to address the gaps in the literature that have so far provided little to no insight around how GBQ men and transmasculine individuals make meaning of their masculine identities within the context of their undergraduate postsecondary experiences. I was able to interview 19 participants, gaining their insights into how they oriented themselves toward masculinity, what influenced them to question their prior orientations, and what disorientation toward hegemonic masculinity looked like for them, if applicable. In listening to and analyzing their narratives, I found four major themes that participants highlighted:

- Participants entered college oriented toward or being able to name hegemonic masculine norms, particularly through enacting and perpetuating antifeminine attitudes and behaviors, controlling their affairs and surroundings, and maintaining family norms and traditions.
- Participants often oriented themselves toward performing hegemonic masculinity on their campuses, especially when competing and comparing themselves with other men, noting when their masculinity or queerness was being policed, and seeking validation from others. Moreover, many participants struggled in such performances in relation to other identities that they possessed.

- Participants oriented or disoriented themselves to hegemonic masculine norms on their campuses by finding support in institutional policies and practices, finding support through an inclusive community, and attempting to seek safety from harm or violence.
- Participants disoriented themselves away from White masculinity through unlearning hegemonic norms, redefining what masculinity meant to them and their identities, and claiming agency to make positive change on their campuses.

This study not only aligned with previous literature (see Table 3) but also demonstrated new findings, including the attachment to family norms, competition with fellow men and transmasculine individuals (i.e., with GBQ students), seeking validation in one's masculinity (i.e., for cisgender students), finding institutional and social supports in order to express and to explore one's masculinity, maintaining one's safety through the use of hypermasculine gender performances, and having GBQ students find agency through rejecting hegemonic masculine norms to create positive change on their campuses. A number of participants also named that their consciousness had been raised around their understanding of masculinity, including a future desire to discuss topics around gender with friends, family, and their broader campus communities. Moreover, one participant stated that this study was a catalyst for them in questioning their own gender identity. These findings can help guide higher education researchers, faculty, and student affairs professionals in their quest to understand how systems of White masculinity impact the lives of GBQ men and transmasculine individuals, as well as what

interventions, policies, and curricula can be implemented in helping to ameliorate these issues while simultaneously nurturing the masculine identity development of GBQ students.

I believe the findings from this study bring to the fore the need to provide greater supports for GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals in order for them not only to disorient themselves away from hegemonic standards of masculinity but also to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally during their postsecondary tenures. Although participants named a number of supports and bright spots on their own campuses in discussing how they were able to resist White masculinity and to reshape how they saw themselves, significant barriers and obstacles remain, including at institutions that participants said had claimed to be supportive of LGBTQIA+ students but did not necessarily emulate such support through its policies, practices, or procedures. Declaring one's campus to be "inclusive" is not enough. Higher education must strive for justice and the eradication of all forms of oppression and supremacist ideologies. Without this effort, many students will continue to be impacted negatively by the forces of White masculinity, with GBQ undergraduate men and transmasculine individuals—especially those with multiple marginalized identities—feeling the most disproportionate harm.

References

Abes, E. S., & Hernández, E. (2016). Critical and poststructural perspectives on self-authorship. *New Directions for Student Services, 154*, 97–108. https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20178

Ahmed, S. (2006). *Queer phenomenology: Orientations, objects, others*. Duke University Press.

American College Health Association. (2016). *National college health assessment: Spring 2016 reference group executive summary*. https://tinyurl.com/y2823a92

American College Personnel Association. (n.d.). *Statement of ethical principles and standards*. https://www.myacpa.org/sites/default/files/Ethical_Principles_Standards.pdf

American Council on Education. (1937). The student personnel point of view. *Studies, 1*(3), 1–14. https://www.myacpa.org/sites/default/files/student-personnel-point-of-view-1937.pdf

Amherst College Queer Resource Center. (n.d.). *Terms and definitions*. Retrieved March 28, 2021, from https://www.amherst.edu/campuslife/our-community/queer-resource-center/terms-definitions

Anderson, E. (2002). Openly gay athletes: Contesting hegemonic masculinity in a homophobic environment. *Gender and Society, 16*(6), 860–877. https://doi.org/10.1177/089124302237892

Anderson, E. (2009). *Inclusive masculinity: The changing nature of masculinities*. Routledge.

Anderson, E., & McCormack, M. (2018). Inclusive masculinity theory: Overview, reflection and refinement. *Journal of Gender Studies, 27*(5), 547–561. https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2016.1245605

Anderson-Martinez, R., & Vianden, J. (2014). Restricted and adaptive masculine gender performance in White gay college men. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice, 51*(3), 286–297. https://doi.org/10.1515/jsarp-2014-0029

Barber, J. P., King, P. M., & Magolda, M. B. (2013). Long strides on the journey toward self-authorship: Substantial developmental shifts in college students' meaning making. *The Journal of Higher Education, 84*(6), 866–896. https://doi.org/10.1353/jhe.2013.0033

Barrantes, R. J., & Eaton, A. A. (2018). Sexual orientation and leadership suitability: How being a gay man affects perceptions of fit in gender-stereotyped positions. *Sex Roles, 79*, 549–564. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-018-0894-8

Bartolucci, A. D., Ziechner, A., & Miller, J. D. (2009). Alcohol consumption and perceived sexual coercion: Effects of gender and personality determinants. *Substance Use and Misuse, 44*, 1399–1414. https://doi.org/10.1080/10826080902961583

Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report, 13*(4), 544–559. https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol13/iss4/2/

Beemyn, B., Curtin, B., Davis, M., & Tubbs, N. J. (2005). Transgender issues on college campuses. *New Directions for Student Services, 111*, 49–60. https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.173

Bell, L. A. (2007). Theoretical foundations for social justice education. In M. Adams, L. A. Bell, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (2nd ed., pp. 1–14). Routledge.

Bennett, J. (2015, August 8). A master's degree in . . . masculinity? *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/09/fashion/masculinities-studies-stonybrook-michael-kimmel.html

Berdahl, J. L., Cooper, M., Glick, P., Livingston, R. W., & Williams, J. C. (2018). Work as a masculinity contest. *Journal of Social Issues, 74*(3), 422–448. https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12289

Bernstein Sycamore, M. (2012). *Why are faggots so afraid of faggots?: Flaming challenges to masculinity, objectification, and the desire to conform*. AK Press.

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2010). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in the United States*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2015). More than prejudice: Restatement, reflections, and new directions in critical race theory. *Current (and Future) Theoretical Debates in Sociology of Race and Ethnicity, 1*(1), 73–87. https://doi.org/10.1177/2332649214557042

Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. Jossey-Bass.

Boysen, G. A., Vogel, D. L., Madon, S., & Wester, S. R. (2006). Mental health stereotypes about gay men. *Sex Roles, 54*(1/2), 69–82. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-006-8870-0

Branfman, J., Stiritz, S., & Anderson, E. (2018). Relaxing the straight male anus: Decreasing homohysteria around anal eroticism. *Sexualities, 21*(1–2), 109–127. https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460716678560

Branscombe, N., Schmitt, M. T., & Schiffhauer, K. (2007). Racial attitudes in response to thoughts of White privilege. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 37*(2), 203–215. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.348

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Broockman, D., & Kalla, J. (2016). Durably reducing transphobia: A field experiment on door-to-door canvassing. *Science, 352*(6282), 220–224. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aad9713

Brown, S. (2019, February 14). Nearly half of undergraduates are students of color. But Black students lag behind. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. https://www.chronicle.com/article/nearly-half-of-undergraduates-are-students-of-color-but-black-students-lag-behind/

Brownhill, S., Wilhelm, K., Barclay, L., & Schmied, V. (2005). 'Big build': Hidden depression in men. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 39*, 921–931. https://doi.org/10.1080/j.1440-1614.2005.01665.x

Cabrera, N. L., Franklin, J. D., & Watson, J. S. (2016). Whiteness in higher education: The invisible missing link in diversity and racial analyses. *ASHE Higher Education Report, 42*(6), 1–125. https://doi.org/10.1002/aehe.20116

Campus Pride. (n.d.-a). *Colleges and universities that allow students to change the name and gender on campus records*. Retrieved March 28, 2021, from https://www.campuspride.org/tpc/records/

Campus Pride. (n.d.-b). *Colleges and universities that provide gender-inclusive housing*. Retrieved March 28, 2021, from https://www.campuspride.org/tpc/gender-inclusive-housing/

Campus Pride. (n.d.-c). *Colleges and universities with LGBTQ identity questions as an option on admissions applications and enrollment forms*. Retrieved March 28, 2021, from https://www.campuspride.org/tpc/identity-questions-as-an-option

Case, K. A., Iuzzini, J., & Hopkins, M. (2012). Systems of privilege: Intersections, awareness, and applications. *Journal of Social Issues, 68*(1), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01732.x

Caswell, T. A., & Sackett-Fox, K. (2018). Gender-atypical personality or sexual behavior: What is disgusting about male homosexuality? *The Journal of Social Psychology, 158*(5), 591–602. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224545.2018.1424111

Catalano, D. C. J. (2015). "Trans enough?" The pressures trans men negotiate in higher education. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly, 2*(3), 411–430. https://doi.org/10.1215/23289252-2926399

Chan, J. (2017). “Am I masculine enough?”: Queer Filipino college men and masculinity. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice, 54*(1), 82–94. https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2016.1206021

Chevrette, R., & Eguchi, S. (2020). “We don’t see LGBTQ differences”: Cisheteronormativity and concealing phobias and irrational fears behind rhetorics of acceptance. *QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking, 7*(1), 55–59. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/754453

Collins, P. H. (2016). Toward a new vision: Race, class, and gender as categories of analysis and connection. In S. M. Shaw & J. Lee (Eds.), *Women’s voices, feminist visions: Class and contemporary readings* (2nd ed., pp. 65–75). McGraw Hill.

Connell, R. W. (1987). *Gender and power: Society, the person and sexual politics*. University of California Press.

Connell, R. W. (1995). *Masculinities*. Polity Press.

Corprew, C. S., III, Matthews, J. S., & DeVell Mitchell, A. (2014). Men at the crossroads: A profile analysis of hypermasculinity in emerging adulthood. *The Journal of Men’s Studies, 22*(2), 105–121. https://doi.org/10.3149/jms.2202.105

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review, 43*(6), 1241–1299. https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039

Cunningham, M., Phillips Swanson, D., & Hayes, D. M. (2013). School- and community-based associations to hypermasculine attitudes in African American adolescent

males. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 83*(2/3), 244–251. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajop.12029

Davis, T. L., & Moody, B. (2018). Practices for promoting mindful masculinities. *New Directions for Student Affairs, 164*, 95–104. https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20287

Denton, J. M. (2019). Queer theory: Deconstructing sexual and gender identity, norms, and developmental assumptions. In E. S. Abes, S. R. Jones, & D. L. Stewart (Eds.), *Rethinking college student development theory: Using critical frameworks* (pp. 55–63). Stylus.

Desruisseaux, P. (1998, February 13). Many educators are wary of changes planned for English-proficiency test. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. https://www.chronicle.com/article/many-educators-are-wary-of-changes-planned-for-english-proficiency-test/

de Witt, L., & Ploeg, J. (2006). Critical appraisal of rigour in interpretive phenomenological nursing research. *Methodological Issues in Nursing Research, 55*(2), 215–229. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2006.03898.x

Diangelo, R. (2012). *What does it mean to be White? Developing White racial literacy*. https://doi.org/10.3726/978-1-4539-1848-7

Dunn, P. (2012). Men as victims: "Victim" identities, gay identities, and masculinities. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 27*(17), 3442–3467. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260512445378

Duran, A. (2019). Queer *and* of color: A systematic literature review on queer students of color in higher education scholarship. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 12*(4), 390–400. https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000084

Edwards, K. E., & Jones, S. R. (2009). "Putting my man face on": A grounded theory of college men's gender identity development. *Journal of College Student Development, 50*(2), 210–228. https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.0.0063

Eliason, M. J. (1997). The prevalence and nature of biphobia in heterosexual undergraduate students. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 26*, 317–326. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024527032040

Elliott, K. O. (2016). Queering student perspectives: Gender, sexuality and activism in school. *Sex Education, 16*(1), 49–62. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2015.1051178

Elliott, K. O. (2018). Challenging toxic masculinity in schools and society. *On the Horizon, 26*(1), 17–22. https://doi.org/10.1108/OTH-11-2017-0088

Estrada, F., Rigali-Oiler, M., Arciniega, G. M., & Tracey, T. J. G. (2011). Machismo and Mexican American men. An empirical understanding using a gay sample. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 58*(3), 358–367. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023122

Fischgrund, B. N., Halkitis, P. N., & Carroll, R. A. (2012). Conceptions of hypermasculinity and mental health states in gay and bisexual men. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity, 13*(2), 123–135. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024836

Fleming, C., & Davis, S. N. (2018). Masculinity and virgin-shaming among college men. *Journal of Men's Studies, 26*(3), 227–246. https://doi.org/10.1177/1060826518758974

Flood, J., McLaughlin, C., & Prentice, G. (2013). Minority stress, homonegativity, alcohol use and mental health among college gay males. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Mental Health, 17*(4), 367–386. https://doi.org/10.1080/19359705.2013.800006

Foste, Z., & Davis, T. L. (2018). "Am I doing this right?": A qualitative exploration of how college men make meaning of gendered expectations. *Men and Masculinities, 21*(5), 583–602. https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X17696188

Foubert, J. D., Newberry, J. T., & Tatum, J. L. (2007). Behavior differences seven months later: Effects of a rape prevention program. *NASPA Journal, 44*(4), 728–749. https://doi.org/10.2202/1949-6605.1866

Freeman, L., & Stewart, H. (2018). Microaggressions in clinical medicine. *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal, 28*(4), 411–449. https://doi.org/10.1353/ken.2018.0024

Garvey, J. C., Taylor, J. L., & Rankin, S. (2014). An examination of campus climate for LGBTQ community college students. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 39*(6), 527–541. https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2013.861374

Goldberg, A. E., Garcia, R., & Manley, M. H. (2018). Monosexual and nonmonosexual women in same-sex couples' relationship quality during the first five years of parenthood. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy, 33*(1–2), 190–212. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681994.2017.1419561

Goldstein, S. B. (2017). Stigma and stigma by association in perceptions of straight allies. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, *14*(4), 345–358. https://doi.org/10.1080/19361653.2017.1326867

Good, G. E., & Wood, P. K. (1995). Male gender role conflict, depression, and help seeking: Do college men face double jeopardy? *Journal of Counseling and Development, 74*, 70–75. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.1995.tb01825.x

Greathouse, M., BrckaLorenz, A., Hoban, M., Huesman, R., Rankin, S., & Stolzenberg, E. B. (2018). A meta-analysis of queer-spectrum and trans-spectrum student experiences at US research universities. In K. M. Soria (Ed.), *Evaluating campus climate at US research universities: Opportunities for diversity and inclusion* (pp. 49–76). Palgrave Macmillan.

Guba, E., & Lincoln, Y. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.

Guenther, L. (2020). Critical phenomenology. In G. Weiss, A. V. Murphy, & G. Salamon (Eds.), *50 concepts for a critical phenomenology* (pp. 11–16). Northwestern University Press.

Guilmette, L. (2020). Queer orientations. In G. Weiss, A. V. Murphy, & G. Salamon (Eds.), *50 concepts for a critical phenomenology* (pp. 275–282). Northwestern University Press.

Gurin, P., Nagra, B. A., & Zuniga, X. (Eds.). (2013). *Dialogue across difference: Practice, theory, and research on intergroup dialogue*. Russell Sage Foundation.

Hale, S. E., & Ojeda, T. (2018). Acceptable femininity? Gay male misogyny and the policing of queer femininities. *European Journal of Women's Studies, 25*(3), 310–324. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506818764762

Hamilton, C. J., & Mahalik, J. R. (2009). Minority stress, masculinity, and social norms predicting gay men's health risk behaviors. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 56*(1), 132–141. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0014440

Hardy, T. L. D., Bolieek, C. A., Aalto, D., Lewicke, J., Wells, K., & Rieger, J. M. (2020). Contributions of voice and nonverbal communication to perceived masculinity–femininity for cisgender and transgender communicators. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 63*(4), 931–947. https://doi.org/10.1044/2019_JSLHR-19-00387

Harris, F., III (2010). College men's meanings of masculinities and contextual influences: Toward a conceptual model. *Journal of College Student Development, 51*(3), 297–318. https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.0.0132

Harris, F., III, Palmer, R. T., & Struve, L. E. (2011). "Cool posing" on campus: A qualitative study of masculinities and gender expression among Black men at a private research institution. *The Journal of Negro Education, 80*(1), 47–62. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41341105

Harris, F., III, & Struve, L. E. (2009). Gents, jerks, and jocks: What male students learn about masculinity in college. *About Campus, 14*(3), 2–9. https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.289

Harris, J. C., & Poon, O. A. (2019). Critical race theory: Interrogating race and racism in college students' development. In E. S. Abes, S. R. Jones, & D. L. Stewart (Eds.), *Rethinking college student development theory: Using critical frameworks* (pp. 17–25). Stylus.

Hart, C. G., Saperstein, A., Magliozzi, D., & Westbrook, L. (2019). Gender and health: Beyond binary categorical measurement. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 60*(1), 101–118. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022146519825749

Hastie, B., & Rimmington, D. (2014). '200 years of White affirmative action': White privilege discourse in discussions of racial inequality. *Discourse and Society, 25*(2), 186–204. https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926513516050

Hennicutt, G. (2009). Varieties of patriarchy and violence against women: Resurrecting "patriarchy" as a theoretical tool. *Violence Against Women, 15*(5), 553–573. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801208331246

Herek, G. M. (1986). On heterosexual masculinity: Some psychical consequences of the social construction of gender and sexuality. *American Behavioral Scientist, 29*(5), 563–577. https://doi.org/10.1177/000276486029005005

Heyes, C., Dean, M., & Goldberg, L. (2016). Queer phenomenology, sexual orientation, and health care spaces: Learning from the narratives of queer women and nurses in primary health care. *Journal of Homosexuality, 63*(2), 141–155. https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2015.1083775

Hille, J. J., Simmons, M. K., & Sanders, S. A. (2020). "Sex" and the ace spectrum: Definitions of sex, behavioral histories, and future interest for individuals who

identify as asexual, graysexual, or demisexual. *The Journal of Sex Research, 57*(7), 813–823. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2019.1689378

Hoang, M., Holloway, J., & Mendoza, R. H. (2011). An empirical study into the relationship between bisexual identity congruence, internalized biphobia and infidelity among bisexual women. *Journal of Bisexuality, 11*(1), 23–38. https://doi.org/10.1080/15299716.2011.545285

Hoffman, G. D., & Pryor, J. T. (2018). Reframing campus climate data to advocate for institutional transformation, praxis, and activism for LGBQQ+ college students. In K. M. Soria (Ed.), *Evaluating campus climate at US research universities: Opportunities for diversity and inclusion* (pp. 169–184). Palgrave Macmillan.

Hong, J. S., Woodford, M. R., Long, L. D., & Renn, K. A. (2016). Ecological covariates of subtle and blatant heterosexist discrimination among LGBQ college students. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 45*, 117–131. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-015-0362-5

Hughey, M. W. (2012). Black guys and White guise: The discursive construction of White masculinity. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 41*(1), 95–124. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241611431580

Hughey, M. W. (2014). Identity isomorphism: Role schemas and White masculinity formation. *Sociological Inquiry, 84*(2), 265–293. https://doi.org/10.1111/soin.12034

Hunt, C. J., Fasoli, F., Carnaghi, A., & Cadinu, M. (2016). Masculine self-presentation and distancing from femininity in gay men: An experimental examination of the

role of masculinity threat. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity, 17*(1), 108–112. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039545

Jayakumar, U. M. (2015). The shaping of postcollege colorblind orientation among Whites: Residential segregation and campus diversity experiences. *Harvard Educational Review, 85*(4), 609–645. https://doi.org/10.17763/0017-8055.85.4.609

Jetha, M. K., & Segalowitz, S. J. (2012). *Adolescent brain development*. Academic Press.

Johnston-Guerrero, M. P. (2016). Embracing the messiness: Critical and diverse perspectives on racial and ethnic identity development. *New Directions for Student Services, 154*, 43–55. https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20174

Jones, S. R., & Stewart, D. L. (2016). Evolution of student development theory. *New Directions for Student Services, 154*, 17–25. https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20172

Jourian, T. J. (2017). Trans*forming college masculinities: Carving out trans*masculine pathways through the threshold of dominance. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 30*(3), 245–265. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2016.1257752

Jourian, T. J., & McCloud, L. (2020). "I don't know where I stand": Black trans masculine students' re/de/constructions of Black masculinity. *Journal of College Student Development, 61*(6), 733–749. https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2020.0072

Jozkowski, K. N., & Wiersma-Mosley, J. D. (2017). The Greek system: How gender inequality and class privilege perpetuate rape culture. *Family Relations, 66*, 89–103. https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12229

Kachel, S., Steffens, M. C., & Niedlich, C. (2016). Traditional masculinity and femininity: Validation of a new scale assessing gender roles. *Frontiers in Psychology, 7*(956), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00956

Kimmel, M. S. (2008). *Guyland: The perilous world where boys become men*. Harper.

Kimmel, M. S. (2010). Masculinity as homophobia: Fear, shame, and silence in the construction of gender identity. In P. S. Rothenberg (Ed.), *Race, class, and gender in the United States* (8th ed., pp. 80–91). Worth Publishers.

King, P. M., & Shuford, B. C. (1996). A multicultural view is a more cognitively complex view: Cognitive development and multicultural education. *American Behavioral Scientist, 40*, 153–164. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764296040002006

Langdridge, D. (2017). Phenomenology. In B. Gough (Ed.), *The Palgrave handbook of critical social psychology* (pp. 165–183). Palgrave Macmillan.

Lanzieri, N., & Hildebrandt, T. (2011). Using hegemonic masculinity to explain gay male attraction to muscular and athletic men. *Journal of Homosexuality, 58*(1), 275–293. https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2011.540184

Lensmire, T. J., McManimon, S. K., Tierney, J. D., Lee-Nichols, M., Casey, Z., Lensmire, A., & Davis, B. (2013). McIntosh as synecdoche: How teacher education's focus on White privilege undermines antiracism. *Harvard Educational Review, 83*(3), 410–431. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.83.3.35054h14l8230574

Lewis, A. E. (2004). "What group?" Studying Whites and Whiteness in the era of "color-blindness." *Sociological Theory, 22*(4), 623–646. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0735-2751.2004.00237.x

Lewis, A. E., Chelser, M., & Format, T. A. (2000). The impact of "colorblind" ideologies on students of color: Intergroup relations at a predominantly White university. *Journal of Negro Education, 69*, 74–91. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2696266

Liebow, N. (2016). Internalized oppression and its varied moral harms: Self-perceptions of reduced agency and criminality. *Hypatia, 31*(4), 713–729. https://doi.org/10.1111/hypa.12265

Martin-Storey, A. (2015). Prevalence of dating violence among sexual minority youth: Variation across gender, sexual minority identity and gender of sexual partners. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 44*, 211–244. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-013-0089-0

Matos, K., O'Neill, O. M., & Lei, X. (2018). Toxic leadership and the masculinity contest culture: How "win or die" cultures breed abusive leadership. *Journal of Social Issues, 74*(3), 500–528. https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12284

Mayhew, M. J., Rockenbach, A. N., Bowman, N. A., Seifert, T. A., Wolniak, G. C., Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2016). *How college affects students: 21st century evidence that higher education works* (Vol. 3). Jossey-Bass.

McCabe, P. C., Dragowski, E. A., & Rubinson, F. (2013). What is homophobic bias anyway? Defining and recognizing microaggressions and harassment of LGBTQ

youth. *Journal of School Violence, 12*(1), 7–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2012.731664

McCormack, M., Wignall, K., & Morris, M. (2016). Gay guys using gay language: Friendship, shared values and the intent-context-effect matrix. *The British Journal of Sociology, 67*(4), 747–767. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12203

Mellins, C. A., Walsh, K., Sarvet, A. L., Wall, M., Gilbert, L., Santelli, J. S., Thompson, M., Wilson, P. A., Khan, S., Benson, S., Bah, K., Kaufman, K. A., Reardon, L., & Hirsch, J. S. (2017). Sexual assault incidents among college undergraduates: Prevalence and factors associated with risk. *PLOS ONE, 12*(11), Article e0192129. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0186471

Mereish, E. H., Katz-Wise, S. L., & Woulfe, J. (2017). We're here and we're queer: Sexual orientation and sexual fluidity differences between bisexual and queer women. *Journal of Bisexuality, 17*(1), 125–139. https://doi.org/10.1080/15299716.2016.1217448

Meyer, I. H., & Wilson, P. A. (2009). Sampling lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 56*(1), 23–31. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0014587

Miller, B., & Behm-Morawitz, E. (2016). "Masculine guys only": The effects of femmephobic mobile dating application profiles on partner selection for men who have sex with men. *Computers in Human Behavior, 62*, 176–185. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.03.088

Miller, R. A., & Dika, S. L. (2018). Perceptions of campus climate at the intersections of disability and LGBTQIA+ identities. In K. M. Soria (Ed.), *Evaluating campus climate at US research universities: Opportunities for diversity and inclusion* (pp. 77–102). Palgrave Macmillan.

Minnesota Private College Council. (n.d.). *Our colleges.* Retrieved March 31, 2021, from https://mnprivatecolleges.org/our-colleges

Minnesota State. (n.d.). *Campuses and programs.* Retrieved March 31, 2021, from https://minnstate.edu/campusesprograms/

Minnesota State Demographic Center. (2016). *Seven-county Twin Cities region surpassed 3 million people in 2015*. Retrieved March 28, 2021, from https://mn.gov/admin/demography/news/media-releases/?id=36-250801

Moradi, B., Wiseman, M. C., DeBlaere, C., Goodman, M. B., Sarkees, A., Brewster, M. E., & Huang, Y. P. (2010). LGB of color and White individuals' perceptions of heterosexist stigma, internalized homophobia, and outness: Comparisons of levels and links. *The Counseling Psychologist, 38*(3), 397–424. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000009335263

Morgan, D. L., Zimmerman, H. B., Terrell, T. N., & Marcotte, B. A. (2015). "Stick with yourselves; it's what's normal": The intergroup racial attitudes of senior, White, fraternity men. *Journal of College and Character, 16*(2), 103–119. https://doi.org/10.1080/2194587X.2015.1024796

Morris, M. (2018). "Gay capital" in gay student friendship networks: An intersectional analysis of class, masculinity, and decreased homophobia. *Journal of Social and*

Personal Relationships, 35(9), 1183–1204. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407517705737

Morse, J. M. (2017). *Analyzing and conceptualizing the theoretical foundations of nursing*. Springer.

Moseson, H., Zozanis, N., Goldberg, E., Fix, L., Durden, M., Stoeffler, A., Hastings, J., Cudlitz, L., Lesser-Lee, B., Letcher, L., Reyes, A., & Obedin-Maliver, J. (2020). The imperative for transgender and gender nonbinary inclusion. *Beyond Women's Health, 135*(5), 1059–1068. https://doi.org/10.1097/AOG.0000000000003816

Moskowitz, D. A., & Hart, T. A. (2011). The influence of physical body traits and masculinity on anal sex roles in gay and bisexual men. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 40*(4), 835–841. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-011-9754-0

Murchison, G. R., Boyd, M. A., & Pachankis, J. E. (2017). Minority stress and the risk of unwanted sexual experiences in LGBQ undergraduates. *Sex Roles, 77*, 221–238. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-016-0710-2

Nadal, K. L., Whitman, C. N., Davis, L. S., Erazo, T., & Davidoff, K. C. (2016). Microaggressions toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and genderqueer people: A review of the literature. *The Journal of Sex Research, 53*(4–5), 488–508. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2016.1142495

National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.). *Nontraditional undergraduates / definitions and data*. Retrieved March 28, 2021, from https://nces.ed.gov/pubs/web/97578e.asp

National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *Undergraduate enrollment*. Retrieved March 28, 2021, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cha.asp

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. (2010). *NISVS: An overview of 2010 findings on victimization by sexual orientation*. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/cdc_nisvs_victimization_final-a.pdf

Neuendorf, K. A. (2019). Content analysis and thematic analysis. In P. Brough (Ed.), *Advanced research methods for applied psychology: Design, analysis, and reporting* (pp. 211–223). Taylor & Francis.

Newman, M. A. (1992). Prevailing paradigms in nursing. *Nursing Outlook, 40*(1), 10–3.

O'Neil, J. M., Helms, B. J., Gable, R. K., David, L., & Wrightsman, L. S. (1986). Gender-role conflict scale: College men's fear of femininity. *Sex Roles, 14*(5/6), 335–350. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00287583

Orozco, R. C., & Perez-Felkner, L. (2018). *Ni de aquí, ne de allá*: Conceptualizing the self-authorship experience of gay Latino men using *conocimiento*. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 17*(4), 386–394. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2017.1371018

Pachankis, J. E., & Hatzenbuehler, M. L. (2013). The social development of contingent self-worth in sexual minority young men: An empirical investigation of the "best little boy in the world" hypothesis. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 35*, 176–190. https://doi.org/10.1080/01973533.2013.764304

Pachankis, J. E., Sullivan, T. J., Feinstein, B. A., & Newcomb, M. E. (2018). Young adult gay and bisexual men's stigma experiences and mental health: An 8-year

longitudinal study. *Developmental Psychology, 54*(7), 1381–1393. https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000518

Paley, J. (2017). *Phenomenology as qualitative research: A critical analysis of meaning attribution*. Routledge.

Patton, L. D., & Bondi, S. (2015). Nice White men or social justice allies?: Using critical race theory to examine how White male faculty and administrators engage in ally work. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 18*(4), 488–514. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2014.1000289

Patton, L. D., Renn, K. A., Guido, F. M., & Quaye, S. J. (2016). *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice* (3rd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Peden-McAlpine, C. (2020, January 30). [Lecture notes on qualitative research]. Department of Nursing, University of Minnesota.

Pettigrew, T. F. (1998). Intergroup contact theory. *Annual Review of Psychology, 49*, 65–85. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.49.1.65

Phillips, D. A. (2006). Masculinity, male development, gender, and identity: Modern and postmodern meanings. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing, 27*, 403–423. https://doi.org/10.1080/01612840600569666

Plano Clark, V. L., & Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Understanding research: A consumer's guide* (2nd ed.). Pearson.

Pleck, J. H. (1995). The gender role strain paradigm: An update. In R. F. Levant & W. S. Pollack (Eds.), *A new psychology of men* (pp. 11–32). Basic.

Polit, D. F., & Beck, C. T. (2008). *Resource manual for nursing research: Generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice* (8th ed.). Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (2005). Language and meaning: Data collection in qualitative research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*(2), 137–145. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.137

Posadas, J. (2017). Teaching the cause of rape culture: Toxic masculinity. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion, 33*(1), 177–179. https://doi.org/10.2979/jfemistudreli.33.1.23

Quinlan, C. (2019, March 12). Here's how Brown University is tackling toxic masculinity. *ThinkProgress*. https://archive.thinkprogress.org/brown-university-masculinity-101-program-toxic-masculinity-higher-education-4815b4931c51/

Rankin, S., Weber, G., Blumenfeld, W., & Frazer, S. (2010). *2010 state of higher education for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people*. Campus Pride.

Reddy, R., Kumar Sharma, A., & Jha, M. (2019). Hegemonic masculinity or masculine domination: Toward a comprehensive social theory of gender. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, 39*(3/4), 296–310. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-08-2018-0133

Reigeluth, C. S., & Addis, M. E. (2016). Adolescent boys' experiences with policing of masculinity: Forms, functions, and consequences. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity, 17*(1), 74–83. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039342

Reisner, S. L., Deutsch, M. B., Peitzmeier, S. M., White Hughto, J. M., Cavanugh, T. P., Pardee, D. J., McLean, S. A., Panther, L. A., Gelman, M., Mimiaga, M. J., & Potter, J. E. (2018). Test performance and acceptability of self- versus provider-collected swabs for high-risk HPV DNA testing in female-to-male trans masculine patients. *PLOS ONE, 13*(3), Article e0190172. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0190172

Reisner, S. L., Greytak, E. A., Parsons, J. T., & Ybarra, M. L. (2015). Gender minority social stress in adolescence: Disparities in adolescent bullying and substance use by gender identity. *Journal of Sex Research, 52*(3), 243–256. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2014.886321

Reling, T. T., Barton, M. S., Becker, S., & Valasik, M. A. (2018). Rape myths and hookup culture: An exploratory study of U.S. college students' perceptions. *Sex Roles, 78*, 501–514. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-017-0813-4

Renn, K. A. (2010). LGBT and queer research in higher education: The state and status of the field. *Educational Researcher, 39*(2), 132–141. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X10362579

Renn, K. A. (2017, April 10). *LGBTQ students on campus: Issues and opportunities for higher education leaders*. Higher Education Today. https://www.higheredtoday.org/2017/04/10/lgbtq-students-higher-education/

Richards, C., Pierre Bouman, W., Seal, L., John Barker, M., Nieder, T. O., & T'Sjoen, G. (2016). Non-binary or genderqueer genders. *International Review of Psychiatry, 28*, 95–102. https://doi.org/10.3109/09540261.2015.1106446

Ringrose, J. (2018). Digital feminist pedagogy and post-truth misogyny. *Teaching in Higher Education, 23*(5), 647–656. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2018.1467162

Robbins, C. K. (2019). (Re)framing student development through critical feminist theories. In E. S. Abes, S. R. Jones, & D. L. Stewart, (Eds.) *Rethinking college student development theory: Using critical frameworks* (pp. 35–44). Stylus.

Robbins, C. K., & McGowan, B. L. (2016). Intersectional perspectives on gender and gender identity development. *New Directions for Student Services, 154*, 71–83. https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20176

Rodríguez-Hidalgo, A. J., Pantaleón, Y., Dios, I., & Falla, D. (2020). Fear of COVID-19, stress, and anxiety in university undergraduate students: A predictive model for depression. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11*, Article 591797. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.591797

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Rumens, N. (2018). Age and changing masculinities in gay–straight male workplace friendships. *Journal of Gender Studies, 27*(3), 260–273. https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2017.1391074

Sánchez, F. J., & Vilain, E. (2012). "Straight-acting gays": The relationship between masculine consciousness, anti-effeminacy, and negative gay identity. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 41*, 111–119. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-012-9912-z

Sandelowski, M. (1995). Focus on qualitative method: Sample size in qualitative research. *Research in Nursing and Health, 18*(2), 179–183. https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.4770180211

Scher, A. (2018, October 1). #MeToo is making colleges teach toxic masculinity 101. *The Daily Beast*. https://www.thedailybeast.com/metoo-is-making-colleges-teach-toxic-masculinity-101

Scoats, R., Joseph, L. J., & Anderson, E. (2018). 'I don't mind watching him cum': Heterosexual men, threesomes, and the erosion of the one-time rule of homosexuality. *Sexualities, 21*(1–2), 30–48. https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460716678562

Searle, J. (2019). Queer phenomenology, the disruption of heteronormativity, and structurally responsive care. *Advances in Nursing Science, 42*(2), 109–122. https://doi.org/10.1097/ANS.0000000000000258

Seelman, K. L. (2014). Transgender individuals' access to college housing and bathrooms: Findings from the National Transgender Discrimination Survey. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services, 26*, 186–206. https://doi.org/10.1080/10538720.2014.891091

Senn, C. Y. (2011). An imperfect feminist journey: Reflections on the process to develop an effective sexual assault resistance programme for university women. *Feminism and Psychology, 21*(1), 121–137. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353510386094

Shumlich, E. J., & Fisher, W. A. (2018). Affirmative sexual consent? Direct and unambiguous consent is rarely included in discussions of recent sexual

interactions. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality, 27*(3), 248–260. https://doi.org/10.3138/cjhs.2017-0040

Smith, W. A., Yosso, T. J., & Solórzano, D. G. (2007). Racial primes and Black misandry on historical White campuses: Toward critical race accountability in educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 43*(5), 559–585. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X07307793

Soria, K. M. (2018). Campus climate at research universities: 2012–2017. In K. M. Soria (Ed.), *Evaluating campus climate at US research universities: Opportunities for diversity and inclusion* (pp. 1–24). Palgrave Macmillan.

Spanierman, L. B., Beard, J. C., & Todd, N. R. (2012). White men's fears, White women's tears: Examining gender differences in racial affect types. *Sex Roles, 67*, 174–186. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-012-0162-2

Sparks, S. D. (2015). Classroom biases hinder students' learning. *Education Week, 35*(1), 13–15.

Strayhorn, T. L. (2016). *Student development theory in higher education*. Routledge.

Strayhorn, T. L. (2018). *College students' sense of belonging* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Strayhorn, T. L., & Tillman-Kelly, D. L. (2013). Queering masculinity: Manhood and Black gay men in college. *Spectrum, 1*(2), 83–110. https://doi.org/10.2979/spectrum.1.2.83

Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life:

Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist, 62*(4), 271–286. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.62.4.271

Theodore, P. S., & Basow, S. A. (2000). Heterosexual masculinity and homophobia: A reaction to the self? *Journal of Homosexuality, 40*(2), 31–48. https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v40n02_03

Torres, V., Jones, S. R., & Renn, K. A. (2009). Identity development theories in student affairs: Origins, current status, and new approaches. *Journal of College Student Development, 50*(6), 577–596. https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.0.0102

Turco, C. J. (2010). Cultural foundations of tokenism: Evidence from the leveraged buyout industry. *American Sociological Review, 75*(6), 894–913. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122410388491

University of Minnesota Office of the Vice President for Research. (2021). *Research resources: COVID-19 pandemic*. Retrieved March 28, 2021, from https://research.umn.edu/covid-19-guidance-research/research-resources-communications-covid-19-pandemic

University of Minnesota System. (n.d.). *Campuses.* Retrieved March 31, 2021, from https://system.umn.edu/campuses

Vaccaro, A. (2010). What lies beneath seemingly positive campus climate results: Institutional sexism, racism, and male hostility toward equity initiatives and liberal bias. *Equity and Excellence in Education, 43*(2), 202–215. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665680903520231

Vandello, J. A., Bosson, J. K., Cohen, D., Burnaford, R. M., & Weaver, J. R. (2008). Precarious manhood. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 95*(6), 1325–1339. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012453

Wagner, R., & Tillapaugh, D. (2018). Residence life, men, and masculinities: Recruitment, training, and administrative processes. *New Directions for Student Services, 164*, 29–39. https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20281

Watson, E. (2011, March 6). Depression in college men and beyond. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*. https://diverseeducation.com/article/31339/

Watson, R. J., Fish, J. N., Poteat, V. P., & Rathus, T. (2019). Sexual and gender minority youth alcohol use: Within-group differences in associations with internalized stigma and victimization. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 48*, 2403–2417. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-019-01130-y

Wedgwood, N. (2009). Connell's theory of masculinity—Its origins and influences on the study of gender. *Journal of Gender Studies, 18*(4), 329–339. https://doi.org/10.1080/09589230903260001

Welp, M. (2002). Vanilla voices: Researching White men's diversity learning journeys. *American Behavioral Scientist, 45*(8), 1288–1296. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764202045008012

White, J. W., & Smith, P. H. (2004). *A longitudinal perspective on physical and sexual intimate partner violence against women*. National Institute of Justice. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/A-Longitudinal-Perspective-on-Physical-and-Sexual-White-Smith/c94bd77805232b6f698611a32a65f7ec654f7ad8?p2df

Willoughby, B. J., Larsen, J. K., & Carroll, J. S. (2012). The emergence of gender-neutral housing on American university campuses. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 27*(6), 732–750. https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558412447852

Woodford, M. R., Howell, M. L., Kulick, A., & Silverschanz, P. (2013). "That's so gay": Heterosexual male undergraduates and the perpetuation of sexual orientation microaggressions on campus. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 28*(2), 416–435. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260512454719

Woodford, M. R., & Kulick, A. (2015). Academic and social integration on campus among sexual minority students: The impacts of psychological and experiential campus climate. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 55*, 13–24. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-014-9683-x

Woolley, S. W. (2012). "The silence itself is enough of a statement": The day of silence and LGBTQ awareness raising. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 43*(3), 271–288. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1492.2012.01180.x

W3 Education. (n.d.). *Types of postsecondary education*. Retrieved March 28, 2021, from http://www.w3education.org/student_resources/types-postsecondary-education.php

Yarmosky, J. (2019, March 21). 'I can exist here': On gender identity, some colleges are opening up. *National Public Radio*. https://www.npr.org/2019/03/21/693953037/i-can-exist-here-on-gender-identity-some-colleges-are-opening-up

Yoder, J. D., & Zipp, J. F. (2018). Helping students to connect gender with social status: A teaching brief. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 42*(1), 105–110. https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684317731886

Young, R. M., & Meyer, I. H. (2005). The trouble with "MSM" and "WSW": Erasure of the sexual-minority person in public health discourse. *American Journal of Public Health, 95*(7), 1144–1149. https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2004.046714

Appendix A:

Higher Education Institutions Contacted for Research

Institution name	Region [a]	No. of emails sent
Minnesota Private Colleges [b]		
Carleton College	Rural	1
College of Saint Scholastica	Rural	2
Concordia College	Rural	1
Gustavus Adolphus College	Rural	1
Hamline University	Metro	1
Macalester College	Metro	4
Saint Catherine University	Metro	1
Saint John's University–College of Saint Benedict	Rural	2
Saint Olaf College	Rural	1
University of Saint Thomas	Metro	2
Minnesota State [c]		
Alexandria Technical and Community College	Rural	1
Anoka-Ramsey Community College	Metro	1
Bemidji State University	Rural	3
Central Lakes College	Rural	2
Century College	Metro	3
Dakota County Technical College	Metro	1
Fond du Lac Community and Technical College	Rural	1
Hennepin Technical College	Metro	1
Inver Hills Community College	Metro	2
Itasca Community College	Rural	1
Lake Superior College	Rural	1
Metropolitan State University	Metro	1
Minneapolis College	Metro	3

Institution name	Region [a]	No. of emails sent
Minnesota State [c]		
Minnesota State University–Mankato	Rural	5
Minnesota State University–Moorhead	Rural	4
Normandale Community College	Metro	2
North Hennepin Community College	Metro	3
Pine Technical and Community College	Rural	1
Ridgewater College	Rural	1
Riverland Community College	Rural	2
Rochester Community and Technical College	Rural	1
Saint Cloud State University	Rural	2
Saint Paul College	Metro	1
South Central College	Rural	1
Southwest Minnesota State University	Rural	3
Winona State University	Rural	4
University of Minnesota System [d]		
University of Minnesota–Crookston	Rural	1
University of Minnesota–Duluth	Rural	3
University of Minnesota–Morris	Rural	3
University of Minnesota–Rochester	Rural	1
University of Minnesota–Twin Cities	Metro	11

[a] Metro = institution within the seven-county Minneapolis–Saint Paul metropolitan area (i.e., Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington Counties; Minnesota State Demographic Center, 2016); Rural = institution outside of this metropolitan area. [b] Minnesota Private College Council (n.d.). [c] Minnesota State (n.d.). [d] University of Minnesota System (n.d.).

Appendix B:

Recruitment Email

Subject: Recruiting Participants for Study on Masculinity and Sexual-Minority Undergraduate Men

Hello,

My name is Michael Grewe, and I am a doctoral candidate in the higher education program in the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development at the University of Minnesota. I need your help.

I am researching **how sexual-minority undergraduate men make meaning of their masculinity within the context of their college experience**, which is research for my doctoral dissertation.

I am looking to interview undergraduate students who are 18–24 years old, identify as a man or transmasculine, and are sexually or romantically attracted to and/or engage in sexual activity with men and/or gender nonconforming (GNC) individuals (e.g., bisexual, gay, pansexual, queer, straight or asexual individuals who are attracted to or engage in sexual activity with men or GNC people, etc.). Students must be currently enrolled at a college or university in the state of Minnesota.

I am hoping you can forward this email (and attached flyer) to students who might be interested. If eligible, participation in the study would include two 1–2 hour interviews, and a 30 minute online survey. All participants would be compensated with a $50 VISA gift card.

Students who are interested in participating should complete this short eligibility survey (z.umn.edu/masculinitystudy) so, if eligible, I can contact them for an interview.

The student interviewer works at Augsburg University. One's decision to participate will not impact an Augsburg student's status or employment in any way.

Questions? Please email me at grewe@umn.edu or my faculty advisor, Andrew Furco, at afurco@umn.edu.

Thank you,

Michael Grewe
Ph.D. Candidate, Higher Education
Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development

University of Minnesota
Pronouns: he/him/his
Email: grewe@umn.edu

Appendix C:

Online Surveys

Table C1

Participant-Eligibility Survey Details

No.	Question					
	Variable name	Universe	Type of question	Code	Response	Instruction [a]
1	Preferred first name					
	FirstName	All	Open-ended	—	—	Continue.
2	Last name					
	LastName	All	Open-ended	—	—	Continue.
3	Email address					
	Email	All	Open-ended	—	—	Continue.
4	Phone number					
	Phone	All	Open-ended	—	—	Continue.
5	If you meet the criteria to be part of this study, how would you like to be contacted to schedule an interview?					
	Contact	All	Multiple choice	1	Email address	Continue.

No.	Question					
	Variable name	Universe	Type of question	Code	Response	Instruction [a]
				2	Phone number	Continue.
6	Please state whether the following things apply to you (check all that apply):					
	ApplyOne	All	Check all that apply	1	I am between the ages of 18–24 years old (including 18 and 24 years old).	Continue.
				2	I am an undergraduate student.	Continue.
				3	I speak English fluently.	Continue.
				4	I identify as a man or as transmasculine.	Continue.
				5	I am currently enrolled at a college or university in Minnesota that confers associate and/or bachelor's degrees.	Continue.
7	Please select the word that best describes your sexual orientation:					
	SexOrient	All	Multiple choice	1	Asexual	If 1, go to no. 9.
				2	Bisexual	If 2, go to no. 11.
				3	Demisexual	If 3, go to no. 9.
				4	Gay	If 4, go to no. 11.
				5	Pansexual	If 5, go to no. 11.
				6	Queer	If 6, go to no. 11.
				7	Same-gender loving	If 7, go to no. 11.

No.	Question					
	Variable name	Universe	Type of question	Code	Response	Instruction [a]
				8	Straight/heterosexual	If 8, go to no. 9.
				9	Two spirit	If 9, go to no. 11.
				99	Other	Continue.
8	Other (please specify):					
	SexOrient_Other	SexOrient = 99	Open-ended	—	—	Continue.
9	Are you sexually and/or romantically attracted to men and/or gender-nonconforming individuals (i.e., those who identify as outside the man–woman binary)?					
	Attraction	SexOrient = 1, 3, 8, or 99	Binary choice	0	No	Continue.
				1	Yes	Continue.
10	Have you ever engaged in sexual activity with men and/or gender-nonconforming individuals?					
	Engaged	SexOrient = 1, 3, 8, or 99	Binary choice	0	No	Continue.
				1	Yes	Continue.
11	Please state whether the following things apply to you (check all that apply):					
	ApplyTwo	All	Check all that apply	1	I am currently a prisoner.	Continue.

No.	Question					
	Variable name	Universe	Type of question	Code	Response	Instruction [a]
				2	I have an acute medical condition, a psychiatric disorder, neurological disorder, developmental disorder, or behavioral disorder that impedes my ability to give consent.	Continue.
				3	None of the above apply to me.	Continue.
12	Thank you for completing this survey. Based on your responses, you have indicated that you do not meet one or more of the following eligibility criteria: • Participants must be 18–24 years old. • Participants must identify as a sexual minority OR have sexual/romantic desires for or behaviors with men and/or gender-nonconforming people. • Participants must identify as a man or transmasculine. • Participants must speak English. • Participants must be currently enrolled at a college or university in Minnesota that awards associate or bachelor's degrees. • Participants cannot be currently incarcerated. • Participants must be able to fully consent to participating in the study.					
—		ApplyOne ≠ 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5; Attraction = 0; Engaged = 0; or ApplyTwo ≠ 3	Statement	—	—	End survey.

Note. The participant-eligibility survey was administered online through Qualtrics (https://qualtrics.umn.edu) and was open from August 3, 2020, through October 29, 2020. "—" indicates that information was not applicable for that question.

[a] "Continue" as an instruction indicates that there was no skip logic, and selecting that answer directed participants to the next question.

Table C2

Member Check Survey Details

No.	Question					
	Variable name	Universe	Type of question	Code	Response	Instruction [a]
1	Reading the aforementioned information, I consent to participating in this survey.					
	Consent	All	Binary choice	0	No, I do not consent.	If 0, end survey.
				1	Yes, I consent.	Continue.
2	What is your preferred first name and last name?					
	Name	Consent = 1	Open-ended	—	—	Continue.

No.	Question					
	Variable name	Universe	Type of question	Code	Response	Instruction [a]
3	Do the themes I generated from your interviews (listed in the email I sent you) accurately reflect your experiences? If so, please explain. If not, please provide any feedback regarding any corrections or revisions that need to be made.					
	Resonate	Consent = 1	Open-ended	—	—	Continue.
4	Is there any additional information that you wish to share but did not get a chance to do so?					
	AddInfo	Consent = 1	Open-ended	—	—	End survey.

Note. The member check survey was administered online through Qualtrics (https://qualtrics.umn.edu) and was open from December 2, 2020, through December 16, 2020. "—" indicates that information was not applicable for that question.

[a] "Continue" as an instruction indicates that there was no skip logic, and selecting that answer directed participants to the next question.

Appendix D:

Preliminary Themes and Subthemes Sent With Member Check Survey

Themes and Subthemes from ALL Interviews

Please read through all of the themes and subthemes that I have generated from ALL of the interviews combined in order to answer the questions below.

Also please note: **HEGEMONIC** means the "dominant version." So, **HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY** means the "dominant version of masculinity in society."

Theme 1: FOUNDATIONS OF MASCULINITY ENTERING COLLEGE
Participants learned specific tenets about what masculinity was before starting college.

- **Subtheme 1A—Avoiding Being Seen as Feminine**
  Participants grew up learning that being masculine meant avoiding having (or avoiding being perceived to have) feminine attitudes and behaviors.

- **Subtheme 1B—Maintaining Control Over One's Surroundings and Other People**
  Participants grew up learning that being masculine meant maintaining control (e.g., power, authority, etc.) in their life, including in their affairs and their relationships with others.

- **Subtheme 1C—Sustaining Family Relationships and Traditions**
  Participants grew up learning that being masculine meant a sense of responsibility and obligation to take care of one's family, carrying on family traditions and norms, and/or having children of their own and raising them with similar values to their family.

Theme 2: PERFORMANCE OF HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY ON CAMPUS
Participants at times conform to traditional standards of masculinity in college in order to fit in with others, while also struggling with whether conforming to those standards are congruent with their own identities.

- **Subtheme 2A—Comparing and Competing Against Other Men**
  Participants compare themselves to other men on campus, as well as engage in conscious and subconscious competition with other men on campus around things such as strength, appearance, number of sexual partners, etc.

- **Subtheme 2B—Performing Masculinity in "Acceptable" Ways**
  Participants express attitudes and behaviors in relation to their masculinity that are accepted by fellow peers, staff, and/or faculty on campus or do not impact the participants' acceptance by others, safety, or sense of belonging on campus.

- **Subtheme 2C—Seeking Validation From Others**
  Participants express a desire to be affirmed and supported by others around how they express their masculinity, such as fitting in within a group, wanting to make friends, wanting to "pass" as masculine, wanting to blend in with their surroundings, etc.

- **Subtheme 2D—Struggling With Masculinity in Connection With Other Identities**
  Participants express struggling with their masculinity in relation to their sexual orientation, gender identity, sex assigned at birth, race, religion, and/or other identities.

Theme 3: NAVIGATING HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY ON CAMPUS
Participants' ability to thrive fully in their gender identity is contingent upon actual or perceived institutional supports, practices, and norms on their campus.

- **Subtheme 3A—Finding Support Through Institutional Policies and Practices**
  Participants identify ways that their campus has supported them in their identity (or identities), including supportive staff and faculty, use of personal pronouns, gender-inclusive housing, gender-neutral restrooms, LGBTQIA+-specific programming, etc.

- **Subtheme 3B—Finding Supportive Community Within One's Multiple Identities**
  Participants express how they have found—or have failed to find—a supportive community on campus that reflects their own identities.

- **Subtheme 3C—Maintaining Safety Through Gender Expression**
  Participants express how they have found—or have failed to find—physical and psychological safety on campus with respect to the level around how they portray their masculinity.

Theme 4: AGENCY AND DESIRE TO RESIST HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY ON CAMPUS
Participants have a desire to shape their own masculinity and make positive change on their campus, often to counter traditional notions of masculinity, but vary in their ability to claim agency to do this.

- **Subtheme 4A—Discovering One's Agency to Change Surroundings**
  Participants describe how they have found—or have failed to find—the power or ability to express, to behave, and to engage with others in the ways in which they would like, as well as the power or ability to create positive change on campus.

- **Subtheme 4B—Redefining Masculinity**
  Participants describe how they have created their own definition of masculinity during their time in college that counters traditional hegemonic standards of masculinity (e.g., dominance, competition with others, resisting showing emotions other than anger or aggression, demeaning marginalized communities, etc.).

- **Subtheme 4C—Unlearning Hegemonic Masculinity**
  Participants describe how they unlearned attitudes and behaviors during their time in college that conformed to traditional hegemonic standards of masculinity (e.g., dominance, competition with others, resisting showing emotions other than anger or aggression, demeaning marginalized communities, etc.).

Appendix E:

Consent Script

Table E1

Consent to Record Questionnaire

No.	Question			
	Type of question	Code	Response	Instruction
1	Are you OK if I record the audio and video for this interview?			
	Binary choice	0	No	Email the Consent to Participate in Study Form. [a]
		1	Yes	Turn on the recording function on Zoom and read the text below.

[a] All participants consented to record the audio and video for each interview; the Consent to Participate in Study Form was not used.

Purposes
You are being asked to take part in a research study entitled "Understanding How Undergraduate Sexual-Minority Men Make Meaning of Their Masculine Identities Within the Context of the College Experience."

It is being conducted by myself, Michael Grewe, a student investigator and a doctoral candidate in higher education in the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development at the University of Minnesota. My phone is [phone number], and my email is grewe@umn.edu.

The investigator and faculty advisor is Professor Andrew Furco in the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development at the University of Minnesota. His phone is [phone number], and his email is afurco@umn.edu.

Support
This research is monetarily supported by the student investigator himself.

KEY INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY

What is research?
The goal of research is to learn new things in order to help people in the future. Investigators learn things by following the same plan with a number of participants, so they do not usually make changes to the plan for individual research participants. You, as an individual, may or may not be helped by volunteering for a research study.

Why are you being invited to take part in this research study?
We are asking you to take part in this research study because you are a sexual minority undergraduate man between the ages of 18 and 24 years old attending a postsecondary institution in the state of Minnesota. We believe you have key insights and experience you have to provide in answering our research question.

What should you know about a research study?
- Someone will explain this research study to you.
- Whether or not you take part is up to you.
- You can choose not to take part.
- You can agree to take part and later change your mind.
- Your decision will not be held against you.
- You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

Why is the research being done?
The purposes of the research are to ask you questions about your experiences prior to and in college around how you have come to understand and make meaning of your masculine identity in conjunction with your sexuality, race, and other identities.

Questions will also ask you about experiences growing up and in college regarding how you shaped your masculine identity. These questions may elicit responses that provoke significant emotions or evoke traumatic memories. You as a participant are only required to share what you want to for any question, and you may pause or stop the recording or the entire interview at any time. Furthermore, if you need it, a list of resources in your area around mental and sexual health can be made available to you.

How long will the research last?
The research will consist of two approximately 1–2 hour meetings. These meetings will take place between August 3, 2020, and December 23, 2020.

The research will conclude with a survey that will be sent to you no later than January 15, 2021, via email.

What will I need to do to participate if I say "yes"?
For each of the two interviews, you will be asked a set of predetermined questions, along with follow-up questions and probing questions that attempt to expand upon your answers. Prior to each meeting, you have received a copy of the interview questions so

that you could reflect on them if you wish. You may choose to answer or not answer any of the questions to the degree you wish to do so. You may also ask to pause or to stop the recording or the entire interview at any point and ask to continue later.

For the online survey, it will consist of two open-ended questions and ask you whether the themes that I have generated for your two interviews match your experience. You will be given an opportunity to explain why they do or why they do not.

How many people will be studied?
Six to 30 individuals will participate in this study.

What happens if I say "yes," but I change my mind later?
You can leave the research study at any time and no one will be upset by your decision.

If you decide to leave the research study, contact the student investigator so that he can move forward with interviewing other participants.

Choosing not to be in this study or to stop being in this study will not result in any penalty to you or loss of benefit to which you are entitled. This means that your choice not to be in this study will not negatively impact your academic standing as a student, your current or future opportunities to participate in campus programming, or your current or future opportunities to participate in on-campus employment.

What are the risks of being in this study? Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me?
Questions will be asked that relate to your sexual identity, which may, in turn, lead to answers that involve your sexual desires and/or sexual behaviors. Protocols have been established to protect your privacy and to maintain confidentiality. These include:

- Increased security on each Zoom meeting.
- The audio/video recording of this meeting will be stored on an external hard drive in a locked safety deposit box. The student investigator is the only individual to have a key to this safety deposit box.
- Transcripts that are typed up from these interviews will remove any identifying information, such as names (pseudonyms will be used instead that do not match the names of anyone participating in this study), campus names, building names, and other personal information that may enable someone to identify the participants.
- All quotations that are used in publications will remove any identifying information.
- Only the student investigator and his faculty advisor will have access to the raw audio/video.

Questions will also ask you about experiences growing up and in college regarding how you shaped your masculine identity. These questions may elicit responses that provoke significant emotions or evoke traumatic memories. You as a participant are only required to share what you want to for any question, and you may pause or stop the recording or the entire interview at any time. Furthermore, if you need it, a list of resources in your area around mental and sexual health can be made available to you.

Will it cost me anything to participate in this research study?
There will be no cost to you for any of the study activities or procedures.

Will being in this study help me in any way?
There are no direct benefits to participating in this research.

What happens to the information collected for the research?
Efforts will be made to limit the use and disclosure of your personal information, including research study records, to people who have a need to review this information. We cannot promise complete confidentiality. Organizations that may inspect and copy your information include the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the committee that provides ethical and regulatory oversight of research, and other representatives of this institution, including those who have responsibilities for monitoring or ensuring compliance.

We may publish the results of this research. However, we will not use your name and other identifying information in any published materials.

Whom do I contact if I have questions, concerns, or feedback about my experience?
This research has been reviewed and approved by an IRB within the Human Research Protections Program (HRPP). To share feedback privately with the HRPP about your research experience, call the Research Participants' Advocate Line at 612-625-1650 (Toll Free: 1-888-224-8636) or go to z.umn.edu/participants. You are encouraged to contact the HRPP if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complains are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research team.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Will I have a chance to provide feedback after the study is over?
The HRPP may ask you to complete a survey that asks about your experience as a research participant. You do not have to complete the survey if you do not want to. If you choose to complete the survey, your responses will be anonymous.

If you are not asked to complete a survey, but you would like to share feedback, please contact the study team or the HRPP. See the "Investigator Contact Information" or this script for study team contact information and "Whom do I contact if I have questions, concerns, or feedback about my experience?" of this script for HRPP contact information.

Will I be compensated for my participation?
If you agree to take part in this research study, the student investigator will pay you $50 for your time and effort. Participants will still receive $50 compensation if they withdraw before the second interview.

Payment will be made using a prepaid VISA gift card. It works like a bank debit card. You may use this card at any store that accepts VISA.

Table E2

Consent to Participate in Interview Questionnaire

No.	Question			
	Type of question	Code	Response	Instruction
1	Having been told of the purpose, risks, benefits, plans, compensation, and additional information about this study, do you consent to take part in this research study?			
	Binary choice	0	No	Turn off the recording function on Zoom and stop the interview. [a]
		1	Yes	Start with the interview (see Appendices F and G).

[a] All participants consented to participate in each interview.

Appendix F:

First-Interview Protocol

After covering what is listed in Appendix E, the set of questions that were provided in the first interview were:

1. What does masculinity mean to you?
2. What does masculinity mean to your identity?
3. What does masculinity mean to you and your identity within the college experience?
4. How do you see yourself in relation to other men on campus?
5. Have your friends, acquaintances, peers, and/or classmates responded or reacted to your masculinity?
    a. If so, how have they?
    b. And if so, what was your response?
6. What does it mean for you to be [one's sexual orientation] and also hold a masculine identity?
    a. Have others responded or reacted to this combination of identities?
    b. If so, how have they?
7. What does it mean for you to be [one's sexual orientation and one's racial identity] and also hold a masculine identity?
    a. Have others responded or reacted to this combination of identities?
    b. If so, how have they?

Follow-up and probing questions were asked based on the content and context of the participant's answers to the aforementioned questions.

Appendix G:

Final-Interview Protocol

After covering what is listed in Appendix E, the interviewer reviewed key highlights from the first interview and asked the participant if those highlights resonated with them. The set of questions that were provided in the second interview were:

1. From where and whom did you learn what masculinity was?
2. What was your response growing up to that definition of masculinity?
    a. Why did you respond in that way?
3. Did your meaning of your masculinity change in your transition to college?
4. Have any experiences in college changed that definition of masculinity for you?
5. Why do you consider yourself to be a man/masculine?
6. What have you learned—if anything—about yourself through these interviews that you might not have known before?
    a. If anything was learned, how do you plan to move forward using the new information you have?

Follow-up and probing questions were asked based on the content and context of the participant's answers to the aforementioned questions.

Upon the conclusion of the interview, the following things were covered with the participant:

- The timeline for the remainder of the study, including information about the member check survey and planned publication of this research, including emailing the participant the final version of the paper.

- Obtaining the participant's preferred mailing address in order to mail them a $50 VISA gift card.

Appendix H:

First Round of Codes

The phrases listed below were the initial codes generated from the transcripts; they are listed in alphabetical order. After undertaking a critical thematic analysis utilizing Braun and Clark's (2006) framework, these codes were adjusted, reworded, and/or merged, as well as grouped into themes and subthemes (see Appendix I).

- Advocate for oneself
- Advocate for others
- Amount of agency
- Become hypermasculine
- Being too out as queer
- Biphobia or bisexual erasure
- Building allyship with other marginalized communities
- Can pass as masculine
- Can reinvent oneself away from relatives
- Cannot be full self in college
- Cannot be sexuality and race
- Cannot be sexuality and religion
- Cars
- College reinforces binary
- Comfort in outness as queer
- Comfortable being a man
- Compare myself to straight men
- Concern for being outed
- Concern for safety
- Concern of judgment by others
- Conform to traditional masculine roles
- Connect more with women
- Disconnected from peers
- Distrust White people
- Do not show emotion
- Embracing femininity
- Embracing nonbinary identity
- Excited to be masculine

- Experience being White-passing
- Explored gender identity
- Family unsupportive
- Feeling un-American
- Femininity means gay
- Femininity means looks are important
- Femininity means risk of sexual assault
- Finding support from coworkers
- Finding support in classroom
- Finding support in student-led group
- Fit in with straight men
- Fresh start in college allows for exploration
- Fully embrace oneself
- Gay is limited
- Gay means looking attractive
- Harassed by fellow students
- Have to pay attention to my masculinity
- Internalized homophobia
- Internalized transphobia
- Intimidation from men
- Judgment by gay men
- Lack of queer Indigenous people and queer people of color on campus
- Lack of queer community on campus
- Lack of transgender community on campus
- Learned masculinity from college
- Learned masculinity from faculty
- Learned masculinity from father
- Learned masculinity from father-figure
- Learned masculinity from friends
- Learned masculinity from grandfather
- Learned masculinity from media
- Learned masculinity from student leaders
- Learned toxic masculinity
- Longed to be seen as masculine
- Masculine means not caring
- Masculinity as aggressive
- Masculinity as biological
- Masculinity as brave

- Masculinity as dominance
- Masculinity as hindrance
- Masculinity as respect
- Masculinity hurts mental health
- Masculinity is accepted
- Masculinity is best fit
- Masculinity is policed by others
- Masculinity means anger
- Masculinity means being seen and heard
- Masculinity means competition
- Masculinity means context
- Masculinity means control
- Masculinity means dating women
- Masculinity means different things to different people
- Masculinity means fluid
- Masculinity means having a penis
- Masculinity means leading others
- Masculinity means not feminine
- Masculinity means not gay
- Masculinity means nothing
- Masculinity means personal space respected
- Masculinity means responsibility
- Masculinity means rigid
- Masculinity means selfish
- Masculinity means taking risks
- Masculinity means Whiteness
- Masculinity not most salient
- Masculinity taken seriously
- Masculinity does not mean man
- Minimizing differences
- Multiple identities reflect self
- Nonacceptance from others
- Nonreaction to masculinity
- Nonsupport from campus officials
- Not fearing sexual assault
- Not queer enough
- Not relating to gay men
- Passing family line down

- Perception of college as an accepting place
- Perception of masculinity is different in another country
- Perpetuating misogyny
- Perpetuating racism
- Pressure around dating
- Pressure to look attractive
- Pride as queer
- Queer means unprofessional
- Queerness is fluid
- Queerness is not the norm
- Queerness is predatory
- Queerness is White
- Queerness means different things to different people
- Queerness not salient identity
- Queerness not taken seriously
- Questioning masculinity
- Race not salient identity
- Racially ambiguous
- Racism impacts masculinity
- Racism impacts queerness
- Realizing male privilege
- Realizing White privilege
- Redefining masculinity
- Rejecting feminine expression
- Resist traditional masculinity
- Resisting homophobia
- Resisting misogyny
- Resisting racism
- Resisting traditional masculinity is brave
- Role models important
- Safer to be closeted
- Safety and community in housing
- Safety in bathrooms
- Seeking validation
- Self-acceptance
- Sexual competition between sexual-minority men
- Social hierarchy exists
- Support from family

- Support from friends and peers
- Support from partner
- Support from queer friends
- Support from staff and faculty
- Support from student organizations
- Support in access to resources
- Taking up space
- Tokenized as a gay man
- Tokenized as a person of color
- Tokenized as a transgender person
- Tomboy is OK
- Transphobia by gay cisgender men
- Understand one's identity better
- Understanding one's sexuality helped in understanding one's gender
- View of gender has evolved
- Visible LGBTQIA+ community on campus
- Wanted to make masculinity one's own thing
- Whiteness means heritage

Appendix I:

Final Codebook

Table I1

Final Codebook for Theme 1—Foundations of Masculinity Entering College

Code	Definition
Subtheme 1A: Avoiding being seen as feminine	
Femininity meant being gay, bisexual, or queer (GBQ)	Participant perceived that, as a man, acting or expressing as feminine meant one's sexual orientation was not heterosexual.
Learned masculinity from friends	Participant learned what it meant to be masculine from male childhood friends.
Learned masculinity from media	Participant learned what it meant to be masculine from watching television and movies.
Masculinity meant assigned male sex at birth	Participant associated masculinity with being assigned male sex at birth (e.g., masculinity meant having a penis).
Masculinity meant attracted to women	Participant associated masculinity as exclusively dating or being interested in women.
Masculinity meant nonfeminine	Participant associated masculinity as the polar opposite of femininity; anything that the participant identified as having "feminine" qualities was not considered masculine.
Masculinity meant non-GBQ	Participant associated masculinity with not being interested in men and/or nonbinary individuals.
Masculinity meant rigid	Participant associated masculinity as being confined to a strict set of characteristics; participant felt constrained in how masculinity could be expressed.

Code	Definition
Subtheme 1A: Avoiding being seen as feminine	
Tomboy was acceptable	Participant described how expressing as masculine despite being assigned female sex at birth was considered acceptable by those around them in their childhood.
Subtheme 1B: Maintaining control over one's surroundings and other people	
Learned toxic masculinity	Participant learned that masculinity meant exhibiting behaviors that were violent, attitudes that were antiwoman or anti-people of color, and/or behaviors that were controlling of others.
Masculinity meant aggressive	Participant associated masculinity with being aggressive or overly assertive.
Masculinity meant anger	Participant associated masculinity as overly demonstrating anger.
Masculinity meant being White	Participant associated masculinity with being White.
Masculinity meant bravery	Participant associated masculinity with being brave, courageous, and/or daring.
Masculinity meant control	Participant associated masculinity as having control over one's life and surroundings, such as having one's life together, being organized, and/or wielding power over or for other people.
Masculinity meant dominance	Participant associated masculinity with dominance over others, not being passive, and/or strength.
Masculinity meant risk-taking	Participant associated masculinity as taking risks in life, including with relationships, finances, and entertainment options.
Masculinity meant selfish	Participant associated masculinity as being selfish and/or self-centered.

Code	Definition
Subtheme 1B: Maintaining control over one's surroundings and other people	
Masculinity perceived differently in another country	Participant associated masculinity differently due to growing up outside of the United States for a portion of their life.
Subtheme 1C: Sustaining family relationships and traditions	
Family was supportive	Participant indicated that their family did support their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
Family was unsupportive	Participant indicated that their family did not support their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
Learned masculinity from father	Participant learned what it meant to be masculine from their father.
Learned masculinity from father figure	Participant learned what it meant to be masculine from a father figure in their life (e.g., grandfather, mother's boyfriend).
Masculinity meant passing down familial name and customs	Participant discussed the importance of continuing to carry their family's name, traditions, and/or practices, or discussed how family members stressed to them that they needed to do this.
Masculinity meant respect from others	Participant associated masculinity as having the respect or reverence of other people.
Masculinity meant responsibility	Participant associated masculinity as having major responsibilities in one's life, including familial duties (e.g., taking care of mom, siblings, children, etc.), finances, academics, etc.

Table I2

Final Codebook for Theme 2—Performance of Hegemonic Masculinity on Campus

Code	Definition
Subtheme 2A: Comparing and competing against other men	
Compared and contrasted with straight cisgender men	Participant expressed that they compared and contrasted their masculine attitudes, behaviors, and performances with other straight cisgender men on their campus.
Could pass as masculine	Participant articulated that others on their campus perceived them as masculine (usually if they identified as transgender).
Masculinity meant competition	Participant discussed how they viewed their masculine performance as a competition between themself and other men on their campus (e.g., "who was 'more' of a man," who could win video games, who could win at sports, etc.).
Masculinity meant different things to different people	Participant discussed how they believed each person who claimed masculinity as part of their identity had a different way of thinking about that part of themself.
Masculinity policed by others	Participant expressed that their masculinity was policed by others on their campus (e.g., people made comments about their appearance or behaviors and/or made suggestions about how to appear or to behave around their masculinity).
Masculinity was not most salient identity	Participant described that masculinity was not the most salient identity for them (i.e., they did not think of their masculinity often).
Minimized others' differences	Participant minimized differences among groups of people (e.g., "colorblindness," "we're all the same," etc.).

Code	Definition
Subtheme 2A: Comparing and competing against other men	
Pressured around dating	Participant described that they felt pressure when dating other men (e.g., competition for sexual partners; pressure to look a certain way; rejection from gay men for being transgender, too femme, etc.).
Sexual competition named among gay, bisexual, and queer (GBQ) men	Participant described how they had (a) competed with other GBQ men for sex and/or (b) judged other GBQ men for how many sexual partners they had had.
Social hierarchy existed	Participant described there being a social hierarchy on campus among other students.
Subtheme 2B: Taking in feedback about one's masculinity from others	
Conformed to hegemonic masculine roles	Participant discussed that they expressed their masculinity in ways that conformed to hegemonic standards of masculinity in college (e.g., deepening voice, engaging in certain activities [e.g., hunting, sports, etc.], engaging in certain conversations [e.g., cars, attraction to women, etc.], misogynistic language, racist language, homophobic language, etc.).
Did not show emotion	Participant expressed that they withheld showing emotions to others visibly in college (besides anger or aggression).
Masculinity meant leadership	Participant described leadership in college as a way of demonstrating or proving their masculinity.
Paid attention to self-performance of masculinity	Participant discussed their conscious performance of masculinity to others on their campus (e.g., how their masculinity appeared to other people).
Pressured to foster a public appearance	Participant discussed the pressure to foster a specific public appearance on their campus or on social media (viz., Instagram) and/or to look attractive and to be seen as sexually desirable in these public settings.

Code	Definition
Subtheme 2B: Taking in feedback about one's masculinity from others	
Took up space	Participant described how they took up space in social situations on their campus with their masculine performance.
Subtheme 2C: Seeking validation from others	
Desired to be seen as masculine	Participant discussed their desire to be seen as masculine by others on their campus.
Desired to fit in with straight cisgender men	Participant discussed a want or a desire to fit in with straight cisgender men on their campus.
Judged by GBQ men	Participant discussed judgment that they have received or have perceived to have gotten from GBQ men on their campus.
Masculinity impacted personal space	Participant discussed how their adherence or resistance to hegemonic masculinity impacted how others viewed and engaged in their personal space on their campus.
Masculinity meant being seen and heard	Participant discussed how their masculinity afforded them privileges around being visible and having their voice prioritized over others on their campus.
Masculinity taken seriously	Participant described how their adherence or resistance to hegemonic masculinity impacted whether others took them seriously or not in college (i.e., adherence meant being taken seriously; resistance, not taken seriously).
Masculinity was accepted	Participant expressed that their masculinity was accepted by others on their campus.
Nonreaction to masculinity	Participant described others as not having an overt reaction to their masculinity on their campus.
Not queer enough	Participant expressed a belief that they were not seen as adequately "queer" by certain people on their campus.

Code	Definition
Subtheme 2C: Seeking validation from others	
Not relating to GBQ men	Participant expressed that they did not relate to other GBQ men on their campus.
Queer meant unprofessional	Participant expressed that they believed being perceived to be "too queer" in certain settings on their campus (e.g., meetings, workplaces, etc.) was "unprofessional."
Queerness not taken seriously	Participant described how being perceived as queer meant other people would not take them seriously in college.
Rejected feminine expression	Participant described rejecting, resisting, or hiding feminine expression on their campus.
Sought validation	Participant expressed a desire for their identities to be validated by others on their campus.
Tokenized as a GBQ man	Participant described how they had been tokenized as a GBQ man by other people on their campus.
Tokenized as a person of color	Participant described how they had been tokenized as a person of color by other people on their campus.
Tokenized as a transgender person	Participant described how they had been tokenized as a transgender person by other people on their campus.
Transphobia by GBQ cisgender men	Participant described how they had been the target of transphobia by GBQ cisgender men on their campus.
Subtheme 2D: Struggling with masculinity in connection with other identities	
Conflicted between sexuality and race	Participant expressed that they struggled to understand both their racial and their sexual identities.
Conflicted between sexuality and religion	Participant expressed that they struggled to understand both their sexual identity and their religious identity or upbringing.

Code	Definition
Subtheme 2D: Struggling with masculinity in connection with other identities	
Could not be multiple identities	Participant expressed that they did not believe they were able to hold multiple identities at the same time (e.g., others saw them as just one identity, certain identities "conflicted" with each other, etc.).
Experienced being White-passing	Participant discussed how, as a person of color, they were sometimes perceived as White by others on their campus.
Felt un-American	Participant discussed how they struggled with not conforming to dominant cultural ideals of the United States.
Internalized homophobia	Participant discussed shame, guilt, disgust, resistance and/or nonconfidence around being attracted to men and/or gender-nonconforming people.
Internalized transphobia	Participant discussed shame, guilt, disgust, resistance, and/or nonconfidence around being transgender.
Masculinity hurt mental health	Participant discussed how their desire to conform to hegemonic masculinity had harmed their mental health.
Queerness was not salient identity	Participant described that their sexuality was not the most salient identity for them (i.e., they did not think of their sexual orientation often).
Race was not salient identity	Participant described that their race was not the most salient identity for them (i.e., they did not think of their race often).

Table I3

Final Codebook for Theme 3—Navigating Hegemonic Masculinity on Campus

Code	Definition
Subtheme 3A: Finding support through institutional policies and practices	
College reinforced gender binary	Participant described their college's policies and practices as reinforcing the gender binary (e.g., residence halls, bathrooms, athletics, etc.).
Pronouns affirmed by others	Participant expressed a moment where a person of authority on their campus (e.g., student leader, faculty member) either (a) asked for pronouns or (b) explained the importance of pronouns being affirmed by others.
Safety and community in housing	Participant expressed that their on-campus-living community was important, fostered relationships, and/or provided a safe environment for them in relation to their identity (or identities).
Safety in bathrooms	Participant expressed concern for their safety in bathrooms on their campus.
Saw oneself in the curriculum	Participant expressed that they saw themself (e.g., racial identity, sexual identity, gender identity, etc.) expressed in the academic curriculum of their institution.
Supported by coworkers	Participant expressed that they found support from their on-campus coworkers around their identity (or identities).
Supported by staff and faculty	Participant expressed being supported by staff or faculty on their campus in regard to their identity (or identities).

Code	Definition
Subtheme 3B: Finding supportive community within one's multiple identities	
Biphobia or bisexual erasure	Participant described being the target of biphobic attitudes or behaviors—or not being seen as bisexual by others—by other people on their campus (e.g., being seen as "straight," being seen as "gay," and/or not being validated as bisexual).
Concerned for being judged by others	Participant voiced concern for being judged by other people on their campus in relation to their identity (or identities).
Connected more with women	Participant expressed that they formed closer friendships with women in college than they did individuals of other gender identities.
Gay, bisexual, queer (GBQ) and transgender community was predominately White	Participant described the GBQ and transgender community on their campus as being predominantly White.
Lack of a GBQ community	Participant expressed that there was a lack of a GBQ community on their campus.
Lack of a transgender community	Participant expressed that there was a lack of a transgender community on their campus.
Lack of GBQ and transgender communities of color	Participant expressed that there was a lack of GBQ and transgender communities of color on their campus.
Not accepted by others	Participant expressed that they had not been accepted (passively or actively) by others on their campus as a result of their identity (or identities).
Queerness was not the norm	Participant described being queer as not being the norm on their campus.
Supported by friends and peers	Participant expressed being supported by friends and/or peers on their campus in regard to their identity (or identities).

Code	Definition
Subtheme 3B: Finding supportive community within one's multiple identities	
Supported by GBQ or transgender friends	Participant expressed being supported by their friends on their campus who identified as GBQ and/or transgender in regard to their identity (or identities).
Supported by partner	Participant expressed being supported by their partner (who was also a student on their campus) in regard to their identity (or identities).
Supported by student organization or leadership program	Participant expressed being supported by peers in a student organization and/or a leadership program (e.g., orientation-leader cohort) on their campus.
Visible GBQ and transgender community	Participant described seeing a visible GBQ and transgender community on their campus.
Subtheme 3C: Maintaining safety through gender expression	
Became hypermasculine	Participant described a moment on or near their campus where they performed hypermasculine behaviors in order to counter a perceived threat from someone.
Comfort level in being out	Participant described their level of comfort around being out as queer and/or transgender to other people on their campus, whether positive or negative.
Concerned for being out	Participant described concern around being out as queer and/or transgender to other people on their campus, particularly in relation to one's safety, social standing, social connectedness, or ability to thrive.
Concerned for safety	Participant voiced concern for their safety on or near campus in relation to their identity (or identities).
Harassed by fellow students	Participant expressed harassment (e.g., verbal, physical, emotional, etc.) from other students on or near their campus as a result of their identity (or identities).
Intimidated by straight cisgender men	Participant expressed that they were intimated by straight cisgender men on their campus.

Code	Definition
Subtheme 3C: Maintaining safety through gender expression	
Perceived college as an accepting place	Participant expressed that they perceived college (either their own institution or as a general concept) as a place that was accepting of people who were GBQ and transgender.
Perpetuated misogyny	Participant expressed that they have engaged in misogynistic attitudes or behaviors in college.
Perpetuated racism	Participant expressed that they have engaged in racist attitudes or behaviors in college.
Sexual assault	Participant described being sexually assaulted on their campus, fearing being sexually assaulted on their campus, and/or being concerned for sexual assault occurring on their campus.

Table I4

Final Codebook for Theme 4—Agency and Desire to Resist Hegemonic Masculinity on Campus

Code	Definition
Subtheme 4A: Unlearning hegemonic masculinity	
Explored gender identity	Participant described a moment in college where they had explored or had questioned their gender identity, specifically whether they identified as cisgender or as transgender.
Gay identity was limiting	Participant described the word "gay" as limiting (i.e., in being able to describe one's attraction to nonbinary transmasculine people and/or transgender men).
Questioned hegemonic masculinity	Participant described a moment in college where they questioned their attitudes and/or behaviors and how they aligned with hegemonic masculine standards.
Realized male privilege	Participant identified that they had privileges associated with being a man in college and/or in society.
Realized White privilege	Participant identified that they had privileges associated with being White in college and/or in society.
Reinvented oneself away from family	Participant perceived that going to college provided them the space away from family members to explore their identity and new ways of expression and performance in their masculinity.
Understood gender identity through exploring sexuality	Participant expressed that their exploration of their sexuality in college helped them better understand their gender identity.
Understood identity better through this study	Participant expressed that they understood their identity better as a result of participating in this research study.
View of gender evolved	Participant expressed that their view of gender changed or evolved while in college.

Code	Definition
Subtheme 4B: Redefining masculinity	
Comfort in identifying as a man	Participant described that they found physical and/or psychological comfort in identifying as a man.
Embraced all identities	Participant expressed a desire or an event where they had fully embraced all of their identities in college (e.g., feeling like they could be their "whole selves" on their campus).
Embraced femininity	Participant expressed embracing what they perceived as a more traditionally feminine expression in college.
Embraced nonbinary identity	Participant expressed embracing a nonbinary, genderqueer, or "neutral" gender identity in college.
Masculinity did not mean man	Participant expressed that they did not believe masculine attitudes and/or behaviors were limited to those who identified as men.
Masculinity meant fluidity	Participant expressed that masculinity was fluid in that the definition could change for a person (including for themself) on a short-term or a long-term basis.
Masculinity meant nothing	Participant expressed that masculinity meant nothing to them and/or had little meaning beyond a word.
Masculinity was best fit	Participant expressed uncertainty about their gender expression but stated that masculinity was the most accurate descriptor.
Pride in being gay, bisexual, queer (GBQ) or transgender	Participant expressed pride in being GBQ and/or transgender.
Queerness meant fluidity	Participant expressed that queerness and/or transness as fluid in that the definition could change for a person (including for themself) either in the short-term or in the long-term.

Code	Definition
Subtheme 4B: Redefining masculinity	
Queerness meant freedom	Participant expressed that identifying as queer and/or transgender in college had been liberating for them and/or had opened up additional possibilities for them on their campus.
Redefined one's masculinity	Participant described how they had shaped their own concept or understanding of their masculine identity in college.
Resisted hegemonic masculinity	Participant described a desire or an event in college where they resisted hegemonic masculine attitudes and/or behaviors (e.g., demeaning women or people of color, acting overly aggressive, attempting to assert control over others, etc.).
Self-acceptance	Participant expressed a desire or an event in college where they accepted themself with respect to their identity (or identities).
Subtheme 4C: Discovering one's agency to change surroundings	
Advocated for oneself	Participant expressed a desire or an event around advocating for themself with respect to their identity on their campus (or identities; e.g., advocating to move housing, reporting a bias-related incident, etc.).
Advocated for others	Participant expressed a desire or an event around advocating for others who had marginalized identities on their campus (e.g., officer of an advocacy-based student organization, participation on a student panel, etc.).
Amount of agency	Participant described the amount of agency (or lack thereof) that they felt they had on their campus to express and/or to advocate for themself.
Built allyship with other marginalized communities	Participant expressed a desire or an event around working with people who had differing marginalized identities in order to create positive change on their campus.

Code	Definition
Subtheme 4C: Discovering one's agency to change surroundings	
Resisted homophobia	Participant described a desire or an event in college where they resisted homophobic attitudes and/or behaviors (e.g., use of slurs, statement of antigay attitudes, etc.).
Resisted misogyny	Participant described a desire or an event in college where they resisted misogynistic attitudes and/or behaviors (e.g., attempted or actual sexual harassment, statement of antifeminine attitudes, etc.).
Resisted racism	Participant described a desire or an event in college where they resisted racist attitudes and/or behaviors (e.g., calling for police reform, participation in Black Lives Matter rallies, etc.).

Appendix J:

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

Human Research Protection Program
Office of the Vice President for Research

Room 350-2
McNamara Alumni Center
200 Oak Street S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455

612-626-5654
irb@umn.edu
https://research.umn.edu/units/irb

APPROVAL OF NEW STUDY

July 6, 2020

Andrew Furco

612-625-6977
afurco@umn.edu

Dear Andrew Furco:

On 6/19/2020, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title of Study:	Understanding How Undergraduate Sexual Minority Men Make Meaning of Their Masculine Identities Within the Context of the College Experience
Investigator:	Andrew Furco
IRB ID:	STUDY00010061
Sponsored Funding:	None
Grant ID/Con Number:	None
Internal UMN Funding:	None
Fund Management Outside University:	None
IND, IDE, or HDE:	None
Documents Reviewed with this Submission:	• Member Check Survey.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Consent Script.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Sexual Minority Masculinities in College, Category: IRB Protocol; • First Interview Questions.pdf, Category: Other; • Planned Email 6 - Member Check Survey.pdf, Category: Other; • Participant Eligibility Survey.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials;

	• Second Interview Questions.pdf, Category: Other; • Planned Email 4 - Second Interview Confirmation.pdf, Category: Other; • Planned Email 1 - Scheduling Interview Email.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Flyer.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Planned Email 2 - First Interview Details Email.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Planned Email 5 - Final Interview Zoom Details.pdf, Category: Other; • Planned Email 3 - First Interview Zoom Details.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Consent to Participate in Study Form.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Facebook Posting.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Recruitment Email.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials

The IRB determined that the criteria for approval have been met and that this study involves no greater than minimal risk.

The IRB also made the following determinations for this study:

- The IRB has issued a waiver of the requirement to document consent. Consent must still be obtained; however, the requirement to document consent has been waived because the research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to participants and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context.

This study does not require continuing review. The revised Common Rule (2018 Rule) eliminated continuing review for most minimal risk research approved on or after January 21, 2019. However, the elimination of continuing review does not eliminate reporting requirements or submission of modifications for IRB review and approval. Information about 2018 Rule requirements and investigator responsibilities can be found in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103).

If consent forms or recruitment materials were approved, those are located under the Final column in the Documents tab in the ETHOS study workspace.

In conducting this study, you are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the HRPP Toolkit Library on the IRB website.

For grant certification purposes, you will need the approval and last day of approval dates listed above and the Assurance of Compliance number which is FWA00000312

(Fairview Health Systems Research FWA00000325, Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare FWA00004003).

IMPORTANT: All human research conducted at the University of Minnesota must adhere to the IRB guidance and requirements, Office of the Vice President for Research guidance, and MHealth Fairview and Medical School guidance (if applicable) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the IRB continues to review and approve research, this guidance takes precedence, meaning that some research activities, including enrollment of participants, may not take place at this time for certain types of research. All researchers should review the guidance often as it is updated frequently by the Human Research Protection Program.

Sincerely,

Clinton Dietrich, MA, CIP
Senior IRB Analyst

We strive to provide clear, consistent, and timely service to maintain a culture of respect, beneficence, and justice in research. Complete a brief survey about your experience.

Appendix K:

List of Definitions

The subsequent terms are those that are significant to the understanding of this research:

- **biphobia:** animus, bias, discrimination, and/or prejudice against those who are bisexual, including systemic oppression against bisexual communities; systemic privileging of *monosexual* individuals (i.e., gay, lesbian, and heterosexual/straight individuals; Eliason, 1997).
- **bisexual:** a sexual identity for an individual who is sexually attracted to multiple genders (Mereish et al., 2017).
- **cisgender:** an individual whose gender identity and gender expression are congruent with the sex that they were assigned at birth (e.g., a man who was assigned male at birth and expresses as traditionally masculine, a woman who was assigned female at birth and expresses as traditionally feminine; Hardy et al., 2020).
- **cisheteronormativity:** the ways that sexual- and gender-minority communities have been "abnormalized and unnaturalized" historically and currently in society (Chevrette & Eguchi, 2020, p. 55).
- **demisexual:** a sexual identity for "a person who experiences sexual attraction only after forming an intimate bond" with another person (Hille et al., 2020, p. 813).

- **femininity:** qualities or characteristics associated with being a woman (Kachel et al., 2016).
- **fluid (in one's gender and/or sexual identity):** an individual whose gender and/or sexual identity is variable across time and certain spaces (Mereish et al., 2017).
- **following the lines:** conforming to hegemonic standards around one's identity or identities (Ahmed, 2006).
- **gay:** a sexual identity for a man (or sometimes a transmasculine individual) who is sexually attracted to men (or sometimes transmasculine individuals; Amherst College Queer Resource Center, n.d.).
- **gender minority** or **gender-minority person:** an individual who is transgender or gender nonconforming (Reisner et al., 2015).
- **gender-nonconforming person:** an individual who identifies or expresses between or outside of the man–woman binary (Pachankis & Hatzenbuehler, 2013).
- **genderqueer:** another term for an individual who identifies as having a nonbinary identity (Richards et al., 2016).
- **hegemonic masculinity:** a culturally idealized form of masculinity that centers around the devaluing of femininity (Kimmel, 2010).
- **heterosexual:** a sexual identity for a man or a woman who is sexually attracted only to women or only to men, respectively (Amherst College Queer Resource Center, n.d.).

- **higher education:** see *postsecondary institution* (for the purposes of this research).
- **homohysteria:** "A cultural conflation of male femininity and homosexuality" (McCormack et al., 2016, p. 750).
- **homonormativity:** gay and lesbian cultural norms that attempt to mirror heteronormative ideals in society, often privileging White upper-class sexual-minority individuals (Denton, 2019).
- **homophobia:** animus, bias, discrimination, and/or prejudice against those who are gay or lesbian, including systemic oppression against gay and lesbian communities; systemic privileging of heterosexual/straight individuals (Eliason, 1997).
- **identity development:** how an individual "[organizes] experiences within the environment . . . that revolves around [themself]" in regard to their race, gender, sexuality, ability, class, religion, nationality, ethnicity, language, citizenship status, body shape or size, and other social identity categories (Torres et al., 2009, p. 577).
- **internalized biphobia:** self-animus, self-loathing, or self-hatred against oneself for being bisexual and/or nonmonosexual (Hoang et al., 2011).
- **internalized homophobia:** self-animus, self-loathing, or self-hatred against oneself for being gay or lesbian (R. J. Watson et al., 2019).

- **internalized oppression:** a "psychological phenomenon that occurs when a person comes to internalize oppressive prejudice and biases about the identity group(s) to which [they] belong" (Liebow, 2016, p. 713).
- **internalized transphobia:** self-animus, self-loathing, or self-hatred against oneself for being transgender (R. J. Watson et al., 2019).
- **intersectionality:** "rejects the postpositivist assumptions of an additive approach to social inequality, in which oppression is measured by adding together the effects of identifying with more than one marginalized group (for example, identifying as Black, a woman, and a lesbian)" (Robbins & McGowan, 2016, p. 76).
- **man:** an individual who identifies as a man, regardless of the sex that they were assigned at birth.
- **manhood:** "a precarious state requiring continual social proof and validation" (Vandello et al., 2008, p. 1325).
- **masculine privilege:** the benefits, access to resources, and social power that an individual receives by virtue of being perceived as masculine by others (Reddy et al., 2019).
- **masculinity:** qualities or characteristics associated with being a man (Kachel et al., 2016).
- **microaggressions:** "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate

hostile, derogatory, or negative . . . slights and insults on the target person or group" (Sue et al., 2007, p. 273).

- **misogyny:** systemic oppression against women and individuals who express as more feminine; systemic privileging of men and individuals who express as more masculine (Ringrose, 2018).
- **nonbinary:** an individual who identifies between or outside of the man–woman binary (Moseson et al., 2020).
- **nonmonosexual:** an individual who is asexual or sexually attracted to more than one gender (i.e., an individual who is not heterosexual/straight, gay, or lesbian; Goldberg et al., 2018).
- **oppression:** prejudice plus power over a certain group of people (Bell, 2007).
- **orientation:** one's relationship to society and the power structures at play (Guilmette, 2020).
- **passing (as masculine):** not having others question or doubt one's identity or presentation (as masculine; Catalano, 2016).
- **patriarchy:** "systems of male domination and female subordination" (Hennicutt, 2009, p. 553).
- **privilege:** the benefits, access to resources, and social power that an individual receives by virtue of being or being perceived to be a certain social identity (Bell, 2007).
- **queer:** a sexual identity for a person "that is often characterized by the incorporation of fluidity and antinormativity," though the term is considered

derogatory by some (Amherst College Queer Resource Center, n.d., Terns, Definitions and Labels section, para. 74).

- **queer moment:** a moment where an individual has attempted to resist oppressive systems (Guilmette, 2020).
- **queer phenomenology:** a research methodology that attempts to understand how people orient themselves to hegemonic systems of power within society and how they have made meaning around both conforming to and resisting such systems (Ahmed, 2006).
- **racism:** systemic oppression against Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color; systematic privileging of White people (Cabrera et al., 2016).
- **rape culture:** a culture that enables "socially legitimized practices of sexual violence" on college campuses (Posadas, 2017, p. 178).
- **sense of belonging:** "a feeling of connectedness that one is important or matters to others" (Strayhorn, 2018, p. 2).
- **sexism:** see *misogyny*.
- **sexual minority** or **sexual-minority person:** a man or transmasculine individual who is sexuality or romantically attracted to other men or gender-nonconforming individuals or engages in sexual activity with other men or gender-nonconforming individuals (Martin-Storey, 2015).
- **straight:** see *heterosexual*.
- **tokenism:** a phenomenon where "a member of a small numeric minority . . . in an environment with a homogenous dominant group" who "[experiences] heightened

performance pressures, social isolation, and stereotyping as a result of their numerical rarity" (Turco, 2010, p. 896).

- **toxic masculinity:** a performance of masculinity that is grounded in femmephobia (i.e., the fear of being perceived as feminine; B. Miller & Behm-Morawitz, 2016).
- **traditionally aged undergraduate student:** a student who is 18–24 years of age, especially one who enrolls at a postsecondary institution immediately after graduating from high school (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.).
- **transgender:** an individual whose gender identity is not congruent with their sex assigned at birth (Hardy et al., 2020).
- **transmasculine individual:** an individual who identifies as both (a) on the masculine spectrum and (b) nonbinary, genderqueer, agender, gender nonconforming, or a gender between or outside of the man–woman binary (Reisner et al., 2018).
- **transphobia:** animus, bias, discrimination, and/or prejudice against those who are transgender, including systemic oppression against transgender communities; systemic privileging of cisgender individuals (Broockman & Kalla, 2016).
- **undergraduate postsecondary institution:** a college or university that confers associate degrees and/or bachelor's degrees (W3 Education, n.d.).
- **White masculinity:** the ways that specific performances of Whiteness and masculinity are culturally idolized (Hughey, 2012, 2014).

- **Whiteness:** a social tool and resource for White people to use racial privilege, to maintain superiority over those who are non-White, and to maintain racialized social control (Lewis, 2004).
- **White privilege:** the benefits, access to resources, and social power that an individual receives by virtue of being racialized as White (Hastie & Rimmington, 2014).